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POWER, OPPRESSION, AND LIBERATION: NEW HAMPSHIRE ABOLITIONISM AND THE RADICAL CRITIQUE OF SLAVERY, 1825-1850

STEPHEN LAWRENCE COX

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University of New Hampshire

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POWER, OPPRESSION, AND LIBERATION:
NEW HAMPSHIRE ABOLITIONISM AND THE RADICAL
CRITIQUE OF SLAVERY, 1825-1850

BY

Stephen Lawrence Cox
B.S., Indiana State University
M.A., Indiana State University

DISSERTATION

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the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
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September, 1980

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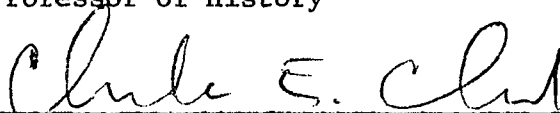
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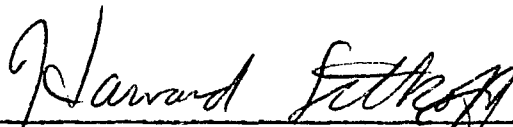
Charles Clark, Professor of History



Darrett Rutman, Professor of History



Robert Gilmore, Associate Professor of History



Harvard Sitkoff, Associate Professor of History

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ABSTRACT

POWER, OPPRESSION, AND LIBERATION: NEW HAMPSHIRE ABOLITIONISM AND THE RADICAL CRITIQUE OF SLAVERY, 1825-1850

by

STEPHEN LAWRENCE COX

University of New Hampshire, September, 1980

This dissertation examines the abolitionist movement in New Hampshire. The study, consisting of two parts, is divided at 1837 when rival factions of Granite State abolitionists sought control of the New Hampshire Anti-Slavery Society (NHASS). Although the nature and structure of the movement had been altered after 1840, abolitionists in both the 1830's and 1840's were clearly bound by the concepts of power and oppression which served as the organizing principles for their attack on a slaveholding nation.

The New Hampshire Colonization Society provided the foundation for the abolitionist movement in the state. Although the society endorsed black removal, colonizationists nevertheless condemned slavery as a sin and recognized that white society was responsible for the impoverished condition of blacks. After reading the works of William Lloyd Garrison many colonizationists left the movement and created the NHASS in 1835.

Members of the NHASS agreed with their colonizationist predecessors that slavery was a sin, but they also held that

politically powerful southern slaveholders were deliberately obstructing the manufacturing and commercial growth of the North. Hence, in New Hampshire, abolitionism was both a movement to free the slaves and a crusade to save northern economic progress from the stranglehold of an archaic and agrarian South.

This concern with the unrestrained power of an oppressive backwater region was taken seriously in rapidly industrializing New Hampshire, for two-thirds of all abolitionists lived in relatively large and prosperous towns, with forty percent residing in the three leading manufacturing centers and the state capital. Furthermore, many of them actively promoted or were personally involved with numerous manufacturing and commercial pursuits.

Unmoved and often angered by the abolitionists' plea, New Hampshire citizens occasionally employed violence to register their displeasure. In Canaan, for example, townspeople forcibly closed the racially-integrated Noyes Academy because they were offended by the presence of blacks and by the fact that most abolitionists engaged in newly created manufacturing and commercial enterprises in what had once been a tranquil rural sanctuary.

By 1840, conservative and political abolitionists had abandoned the NHASS after the radical wing, led by Nathaniel P. Rogers, editor of the Herald of Freedom, advocated non-resistance and women's rights. Once in control of the society, Rogers and other radicals argued that abolitionism would not succeed until the clergy was toppled from power because ministers more than anyone else upheld the authority of the State which, in turn, protected the institution of slavery.

Other New Hampshire radicals took a more direct approach. Stephen Foster, Parker Pillsbury, and others disrupted church services by demanding the right to speak in behalf of the slave. While most radical abolitionists outside New Hampshire were uneasy with this method, they nevertheless withheld public rebuke. Their patience wore thin, however, when Rogers espoused his "no organization" doctrine.

Rogers argued that anti-slavery societies, like the State, were oppressive institutions that stifled free discussion and, therefore, abolitionists should abandon officers, treasuries, and committees. By 1844 Garrison, Foster, Pillsbury, and other radicals denounced Rogers and his counter-productive doctrine. Rogers was further isolated when the NHASS won a dispute over the ownership of the Herald of Freedom. As a result, Rogers established a rival paper dedicated to "no organization."

The NHASS was seriously weakened not only by the internal squabbling but also by the success enjoyed by the political coalition constructed by the maverick Democrat, John Parker Hale. By 1847, when most abolitionists had filtered into Hale's coalition, the NHASS had become superfluous and consequently ceased to exist.

INTRODUCTION

In the massive literature on abolitionism, clearly one of America's most protracted reform movements, certain states come to the forefront as significant areas of anti-slavery activity. This is understandable because not only were these states the centers of important events in the history of the anti-slavery movement, but they also provided many of the more prominent leaders to the cause. Massachusetts, for instance, was the home of William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, and others, and it was also the center of the radical wing of abolitionism, especially after 1840 when a serious breach occurred within the anti-slavery community. The state of New York contributed a number of anti-slavery luminaries, including Lewis and Arthur Tappan, Gerrit Smith, and, after he had moved from Kentucky, James G. Birney. It was also the site of the "Burned-over District," an area in the western portion of the state that was convulsed by religious fervor and by an outpouring of abolitionist sentiment. Furthermore, the headquarters of the American Anti-Slavery Society, the abolitionists' national organization, was located in New York City. At Ohio's Lane Seminary, students under the leadership of Theodore Weld quickened anti-slavery sentiment in the area after engaging in prolonged agitation--agitation that forced a confrontation with the school's officials and ultimately led to the exodus of the students to northern Ohio where they created Oberlin College. Ohio was also the home of Joshua Giddings, one of the most outspoken anti-slavery politicians in mid-nineteenth-century America.

It is evident that these states were centers of important abolitionist activity and that they produced effective anti-slavery leaders. But abolitionism existed in other northern states as well and, although less renowned, champions of the cause in these states were just as intent on ending slavery as their more celebrated associates. The purpose of this dissertation is to analyze the anti-slavery movement in New Hampshire, a state that has received little attention in the historical literature and whose example can shed considerable light on the nature and course of abolitionism in general.

This study is divided into two parts. Part I analyzes the rise of anti-slavery sentiment, the ideological underpinnings of the movement, the social composition of those New Hampshire towns that were centers of intense anti-slavery activity, and the subsequent assault on abolitionists by infuriated citizens who, for a variety of reasons, perceived abolitionism as a threat.

Part II examines the split within the movement, the rise of radical abolitionism, and the eventual death of the state organization. While New Hampshire's political abolitionists, a group that arose after 1840, will not be ignored, the focus in Part II will be confined generally to the radical wing of the movement--probably the most radical contingent of abolitionists in the entire nation. This concentration on the radicals is not meant to denigrate the importance of the political abolitionists, for they were able to increase their votes at every election and, although their numerical strength is not known, it seems likely that their numbers rivalled those of

the radicals. Nevertheless, prior to 1844 the political abolitionists and non-radical abolitionists were, as a body, weak and amorphous. Lacking an effective and vigorous organization, they were in reality more of an appendage to the Massachusetts political abolitionists.¹ Yet, oddly enough, a number of works have dealt with New Hampshire's political abolitionists, while the radical wing has been generally ignored. Furthermore, certain individual radical leaders who did gain some national prominence--such as Nathaniel P. Rogers, Stephen Foster, and Parker Pillsbury--have been dismissed as colorful but eccentric, and, as a result, have been consigned to the fringe of anti-slavery agitation.² Perhaps when compared with abolitionists nation-wide this is a valid judgment. But by removing the radicals from a state or even regional context and by placing them in a national one, historians have diluted their impact, which was, to be sure, confined to one or two states. True, nationally they may have been ineffectual and outside the abolitionist mainstream. But their impact within certain states was great. In New Hampshire after 1840, radicals promoted an extreme brand of abolitionism that not only attracted a sizable coterie of followers but even went beyond the radical formulations of William Lloyd Garrison.

The fact that this dissertation has been divided approximately at 1837 suggests that the New Hampshire abolitionist movement in some way altered its course after that date. In one respect this is true, for after the internal tensions of the late 1830's and the eventual split within the movement in 1840, Granite State abolitionists expanded the realm of their activity, fighting new evils in different and extraordinary ways. Yet, while differences existed between the

1830's and 1840's, the two decades of New Hampshire abolitionism are clearly linked by widely-shared concepts of power and oppression-- concepts that served as the foundation for the abolitionists' attack on a slaveholding nation. In the 1830's, abolitionists not only objected to the power of the slaveholder who reduced fellow human beings to chattel, but to the power of an agrarian, aristocratic, and backwater region that frustrated, through its swollen political power, the more socially and economically sophisticated North. If the slave was a prisoner to his master, an economically advancing northern society was a prisoner to an anachronistic and stagnant South and its "dough-faced" defenders in the North. In the 1840's, radical New Hampshire abolitionists transcended--indeed, they ignored-- the sectional framework and extended the metaphor of slavery, arguing that the State and its chief class of supporters, the clergy, wielded unrestrained power over all citizens, black and white. In effect, all individuals were slaves to the State and, worse, the entrenched "pro-slavery" clergy, seeking to subdue abolitionist activity, allowed the State to shelter the "peculiar institution." Hence, for the radical New Hampshire abolitionists of the 1840's, liberation for all citizens would be achieved only when the power of the clergy and, ultimately, the power of the State were thwarted.

INTRODUCTION

NOTES

¹ This is the suggestion in Reinhard Johnson, "The Liberty Party in New Hampshire, 1840-1848: Antislavery Politics in the Granite State," Historical New Hampshire, XXXIII (Summer, 1978), pp. 127-29.

² On New Hampshire's political abolitionists see Ibid., and Richard Sewell, Ballots for Freedom (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), pp. 126-30. See also Sewell's John P. Hale and the Politics of Abolition (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964), pp. 27-28; pp. 81-82, passim.

On Rogers, Foster and others, see Aileen Kraditor, Means and Ends in American Abolitionism (New York: Random House, 1967), p. 239, passim. See also Kraditor's "A Note on [Stanley] Elkins and the Abolitionists," in Ann Lane, ed., The Debate Over Slavery (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971), pp. 87-101. Oddly, in his controversial Slavery, Elkins attributes characteristics of radical New Hampshire abolitionists to most American abolitionists. See Elkins, Slavery (3rd ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), pp. 175-93.

PART I

CHAPTER I

FOUNDATIONS

In 1838, an angry New Hampshire abolitionist, under the pseudonym "Q.E.D.," wrote that colonizing free blacks in Africa was "a deliberate, premeditated cool-blooded plot to banish them from their native land and to send them to the most undesirable spot on earth." Colonization was not only "a conspiracy" but a "deliberate and malicious wrong"; it was so monstrous that even God was undoubtedly offended by the effort. True, "Q.E.D." recognized that by 1838 the New Hampshire Colonization Society (NHCS) had lost power and prestige to such an extent that only "impotent malice" remained. Nevertheless, it posed a danger because it was "kept up" by southern slaveholders and their northern supporters, "probably as a set-off effort versus anti-slavery," and as long as any organizational structure remained to counteract the state's abolitionists, then it could be viewed only as a "wicked plot."¹

Such assaults on the colonizationists were customary among abolitionists, even in the late 1830's when the national and local colonization societies were experiencing drastic reductions in numbers. Indeed, in the 1830's at least, colonizationists everywhere were denounced as harshly and almost as frequently as slaveowners, since both groups perpetrated either slavery or "negrophobia," the nineteenth-century term for "racism." According to the abolitionists, the colonizationists were more concerned with making America a white man's country than with elevating the position of blacks, even

though members of the American Colonization Society (ACS) and its various state chapters denied all such charges and continually reiterated their claim that they were essentially benevolent reformers.²

Generally, the abolitionist assessment of the colonizationists has been sustained by historical opinion. Acknowledging that there were humane and benevolent supporters of colonization, numerous scholars have suggested that they comprised a minority within the ranks of the ACS and other local societies. Culling endless quotations of black inferiority and pointing to the arguments of slaveholding members of the ACS, many historians have concluded that a sizeable number of members advocated the deportation of free blacks for no other reason than to strengthen the institution of slavery in the South and to settle the anxieties of negrophobic border-state and northern members who feared "race mongrelization" or random black violence. Colonization, therefore, was a natural cause for rabidly anti-black Americans to espouse. Historian Dwight Dumond, for instance, admitted that there was an element of humanitarianism involved; but he concluded that this impulse was merely a tactic to attract northern reformers, a group that would lend a certain legitimacy to the movement. Studying mainly the statements of southern members, Dumond came away with one major impression: "The publications and the speeches of the colonizationists contain enough repulsive stimulants to race prejudice, many of them so vicious as to be unprintable, to fill an encyclopedia." He further noted that colonizationists gave mere "lip service" to the improvements in the status of blacks and that they "did not

recognize that the deficiencies of the Negro resulted from the debasing effects of slavery, from the black laws of the free states, and from all kinds of prejudice and denials."³

Although less shrill, the contemporary American historians, Louis Filler and Lawrence Friedman, have echoed Dumond's sentiments. Filler found that many colonizationists shared a "sweeping contempt and hatred for free Negroes . . . ," while, more recently, Friedman has noted that any genuine, humane ideals propagated by the ACS were in reality part of an elaborate "smoke screen" to hide the "underlying psychic drives" of its members.⁴

There can be little disagreement that a strong anti-black strain exists within the literature of the ACS and certain southern and border-state societies. Many colonizationists were indeed vitriolic negrophobes who earnestly sought to eliminate free blacks from American society as an end in itself. When their program is compared with that of the abolitionists, colonizationists for the most part appear as truculent usurpers of black rights at worse and naive social engineers at best. But a variety of opinion existed within the colonizationist movement, largely because the ACS--representing the pro-southern outlook more often than not--never insisted that state and local auxiliaries conform to the ideals of the national society. As a result, state and local auxiliaries developed into autonomous societies, each viewing the problem of race within a particularly local and regional framework. Hence, by concentrating on the national, southern and border-state organizations one can reasonably conclude that the entire colonizationist venture was overwhelmingly anti-black. In the New England region, however, one

is likely to find that colonization existed in a somewhat more humane form.⁵

The case of New Hampshire, for instance, provides strong evidence that a more benign and reformist element existed within the movement. Many colonizationists in the state decried black suffering, urged the immediate end of the already illegal slave trade, denounced slavery as sin, implicated the entire North in slavery's guilt, and attacked those who believed that blacks were inherently inferior. By expressing these themes in the 1820's, they provided the foundation and springboard for the abolitionists in the 1830's. Any discussion of the New Hampshire abolitionists, therefore, must begin with the state's colonizationists, for they more than anyone else articulated an appeal that would prove to be a major cornerstone of the anti-slavery critique.

The denunciations of "Q.E.D." notwithstanding, the national colonization efforts began with a flurry of optimism and hope. On December 28, 1816, a group of prominent political figures assembled in the House of Representatives at Washington D.C. and formally created the American Colonization Society. As indicated above, the principal object of this new venture was "to promote and execute a plan for colonizing (with their own consent) the free People of Colour residing in our country, in Africa, or such other place as Congress shall deem most expedient." The Reverend Robert Finley of New Jersey was especially pleased because, as the driving spirit behind the movement, his plans for establishing a society had been fully implemented. Searching for a way to combat the problem of a

growing, free black population that was largely uneducated, unmotivated, and "degraded," Finley feverishly worked to convince certain members of government that an American-sponsored colony could be settled by this "unwanted" population.⁶

Finley's hard work paid off. He met a receptive audience in Washington, especially among southern and border-state politicians who shared his evaluation of free blacks. Some of the most powerful men in politics were present at the formation of the ACS. Among the signers of the Society's Constitution was Supreme Court Justice Bushrod Washington, nephew of the first President of the United States. Washington, it was decided, should be President of the new Society--a fitting office for a relative of the much-venerated father of the country. Secretary of the Treasury William Crawford, Speaker of the House Henry Clay, John Taylor of Caroline County, Virginia, General Andrew Jackson, and Richard Rush of Pennsylvania were chosen Vice-Presidents, while the Board of Managers included Francis Scott Key and Edmund Lee, brother of "Lighthorse Harry."⁷

Finley's idea for colonization was not a new one. England had established a black colony at Sierra Leone and, in America, the idea had been seriously considered by Thomas Jefferson, St. George Tucker, and others, as a means of dealing with an institution that posed serious problems for a nation supposedly steeped in republican values.⁸ Yet, as popular as these ideas may have been, a formal organization was not formed until late 1816 and the credit for bringing this about belongs largely to Finley.

The new Society was unique in that it appealed directly to the United States government for funds to establish and maintain a

colony in Africa. However, the Society's members were unable to persuade Congress to act in their behalf. The Congressional Committee on the Slave Trade rejected a proposal that would have provided the funding for an African colony. Even more discouraging was President Monroe's inability to persuade his Cabinet that the Chief Executive could broadly interpret the recently passed Slave Trade Act. The law provided that any African stranded in this country who had been recently captured by slavers could be sent back and resettled in Africa. Monroe had hoped to buy African lands and establish a permanent colony for resettlement, but his Cabinet convinced him to drop the venture. Colonizationists finally were able to obtain land in Africa only after persuading the government to interpret the law liberally. After several failures, land was purchased at Cape Mesurado from local chieftains for \$300. Formal settlement began in August, 1822, and by 1823 there were 150 colonists in the new country of Liberia.⁹

The colonizing of free blacks was considered to be a massive undertaking, but the ACS was convinced that it could be done and, more importantly, that it should be done. In promoting their program, colonizationists emphasized several main objectives. Officially, they sought to remove free blacks from a prejudiced and oppressive society; they sought to make it easier for slaveholders to gradually free their slaves; they sought to provide a Christian community in Africa, from which efforts would radiate for the conversion of the entire continent; and, they sought to end the slave trade, which even a great many southerners found distasteful.¹⁰

As Dumond and other historians have correctly noted, supporters

were drawn to the movement for various reasons, not all of them conforming to the Society's official pronouncements. Robert Finley, for instance, discovered that the numerous free blacks in his New Jersey parish could neither read nor write; that they knew little of the Bible; and, worse, their poverty and licentiousness were keeping pace with their growing numbers. Finley, like many northern supporters living among a large free black population, reached the conclusion that free blacks were doomed in a white man's country and that "everything connected with their condition, including their colour, is against them." They were a degraded people with little ambition, and, with most doors to opportunity shut by an unsympathetic white society, they could never hope to improve their lot. For Finley, their best prospect was to settle in "their homeland" where opportunity would abound, unobstructed by white hostility."¹¹

Finley's analysis was shared by several other colonizationists. However, there was another reason that colonization of free blacks was appealing, especially to southern slaveholders. Most slaveholders--and a few empathetic northerners as well--recognized what could conceivably occur when slaves became violent and dissatisfied. Memories of slave revolts, real or imagined, were fresh in the mind of many southerners. In 1800 Gabriel Prosser, a slave living near Richmond, Virginia, made plans to burn the city and kill the white residents, after which he and his followers would escape to the Indian country in the west.¹² Even though the plot was uncovered and all the ringleaders killed, the threat of slave and free-black violence was a recurrent one. Most southerners realized that if their slaves were sufficiently aroused, violence and destruction

might well result. This fear seemed justified in view of Toussant L'Ouverture's overthrow of French (white) control of the island of Santo Domingo in 1802. Jefferson, acknowledging the danger of a hostile black population, whether slave or free, commented after L'Ouverture's violent revolution that if "something is not done, and soon done, we shall be murderers of our own children."¹³

For many slaveholders the prevention of slave violence rested with the deportation of free blacks who, it was felt, were most prone to create trouble, either consciously or unconsciously. Their very freedom served as an example to slaves who were discontented and unhappy. As one slaveholder said, if slaves saw "others like themselves free, and enjoying rights they were deprived of, they will repine."¹⁴ It was also believed that free blacks plotted and encouraged slave conspiracies, especially after Denmark Vesey's "rebellion" in Charleston in 1822. The African Repository, organ of the ACS, praised those Virginians who were finally "awakening to the solemn consideration of the whole subject of the evil of their [free] colored population. . . ."¹⁵ Free blacks, it was thought, corrupted slaves "and render them discontented."¹⁶ A subdued slave population would be assured only when free blacks were unable to tantalize bondsmen with their freedom.

Because the fear of revolt was a common theme for the African Repository, it often advised slaveholders to vigilantly keep watch over free black populations. Seeing free blacks in their midst, slaves were apt to rebel. In addition to its warnings, the African Repository, as well as the officers for the ACS, were continually trumpeting statistics showing the increase in the number of the

free black population, especially in the South where they could do the most harm. Charles Mercer of Virginia noted that if the rapid increase of free blacks "has not endangered our peace, it has impaired the value of all the private property in a large section of our country."¹⁷ For Henry Clay, free black population growth in general was frightening; but even more horrifying was the rapid increase within southern cities. Clay sought to colonize free blacks from urban centers because here they proved most difficult to control. American cities he proclaimed, would act "as a sort of depot from the country for the colony."¹⁸

Certainly, fear and hatred of blacks motivated many individuals to form state and local colonization societies shortly after the ACS was formed. Indeed, many of the very early societies emerged in the upper South and border-states, especially in Virginia and Maryland. But the New Hampshire society was not created until 1824. This probably can be explained by the fact that New Hampshire was far removed from the institution of slavery and, with blacks comprising only 0.2% of the total state population in 1830, far removed from a free black community as well.¹⁹ In effect, New Hampshire was not gripped by a crisis mentality evident both in the South and in northern areas with large free black populations.

The distance of slavery and the meager black population also explain the more benevolent and humane tone of the New Hampshire Colonization Society. The fear of slave agitators or the fear of increasing free black populations meant little to residents of an overwhelmingly white, non-slaveholding state. Colonization in New Hampshire, therefore, was not a response to a black menace;

rather, the roots of colonization lay within several other benevolent enterprises which were making great strides within the state. The most active and prominent benevolent societies--the Home Missionary Society, the American Bible Society, and the American Tract Society, for instance--found a champion in the New Hampshire Repository, a reform-minded paper published in Concord. Soon to become the major mouthpiece and leading proponent of colonization within the state, the Repository devoted a great deal of print to the defense of Indians and Indian missions, to the Christianization of "heathens," to temperance, to universal education, and to the goals of most benevolent organizations within the state. One of the paper's chief concerns was to help convert "heathens" both "foreign and domestick" and to agitate in behalf of individuals who were at the mercy of a hostile society, be they Indians or blacks. In this sense, colonization within the state was yet another reform enterprise within the larger framework of benevolent causes of the 1820's.²⁰

While a society was not organized until the late months of 1824, colonizationist sentiment was evident prior to its formation. In 1823, the New Hampshire Repository began to take serious note of national colonization efforts, adding yet another cause to its list. When it learned that the ACS had sent three ships of free blacks to Liberia, the Repository exuded praise for such a display of "benevolence," since "civilizing" Africa meant Christianizing it. The ACS was to be congratulated.²¹

Christianizing Africa and transporting free blacks to their "true home" were constant themes enunciated in the Repository prior to the formation of the NHCS. Urging New England blacks to donate

money to the New Hampshire Missionary Society, the paper claimed that the funds would go for the crucial enterprise of African missions. Money spent this way by free blacks was far more constructive than spending it for "vanities," it lectured. In addition, the Repository urged the colonization of free blacks and slaves to Africa because that continent held more freedom for blacks than America. Denouncing both slavery and the justification that slavery bred contented slaves, the paper argued that bondsmen were far from satisfied with their lot. Slave rebellions were discouraged by the paper; but it recognized that slaves and free blacks were mistreated in this country, and the lure to rebellion was understandable. Like any white man in chains, slaves had a real desire to be emancipated; this could be done through colonization. It was, the Repository lectured, a crime to keep people in bonds, be they red, black, or white.²² Extending its critique, the paper proclaimed that blacks did not have an inferior mental capacity, as many whites charged. Blacks were able to handle their affairs sufficiently because they were intelligent human beings; they would even excel if only whites would allow them.²³

To bolster its case for the blacks, the Repository reprinted articles from other papers that echoed the sentiment. One such article from the Boston Recorder, noted that blacks were "ignorant and wretched" not because they were inherently so, but because they were systematically excluded from white society. Free blacks "have not sufficient motive for industry" because they realized it was impossible to advance in white society. Racial barriers were too strong in this country for any black man to overcome: "You

cannot turn them into white men; you cannot make white men forget that they are black." Colonization was therefore the only remedy, because in Liberia there were not whites to hold them back. Colonization would also mean that recalcitrant slaveholders might be more willing to manumit their slaves, since freedmen would be required to emigrate.²⁴

Recognizing that colonizationist sentiment was increasing in New Hampshire, the ACS began to formalize plans to establish a society in the state. In the summer of 1824 the Reverend Chester Wright, a salaried agent for the American Colonization Society residing in Vermont, notified New Hampshire papers that he had been dispatched to develop the New Hampshire Colonization Society. Because money was needed for any new society to be a success, he urged sympathetic ministers to seek funds through their congregations. With that advice, Wright began making his way to Concord, stopping along the way to persuade townspeople to support the colonization of free blacks.²⁵

The Repository praised Wright's "benevolent spirit" when it discovered that he was in the state to organize a colonization society. Escalating its promotion of colonization, the paper claimed it was both a "national and Benevolent" venture. If successful, it would achieve national unity because it would eventually "wipe away a foul stain which has long tarnished the splendor of our national glory." It was also a benevolent enterprise because it sought to diminish human suffering; it sought to elevate the character of the black; and most important of all, it sought to secure "the natural rights of a very considerable portion of the human family."²⁶

Believing it had interpreted the goals of the ACS correctly, the Repository, with a notable excess of enthusiasm, reported that the national society's "final accomplishment" was in view: "nothing less than the total emancipation of the slave population in this country, and the settlement of all who wish to emigrate on the luxuriant soil of their native shores." The Repository hoped that Wright would succeed in establishing an auxiliary colonization society in New Hampshire.²⁷

Wright's initial discourse, delivered at an open meeting, was deemed a success. After Wright's presentation, Josiah Bartlett, President of the New Hampshire Senate, was asked to chair the remainder of the meeting and to explore the possibility of forming a colonization society in New Hampshire. A committee of ten was chosen to write a constitution and to present it at the next meeting, scheduled for December 3, 1824.

The Repository lauded the initial proceedings and urged the people of New Hampshire to support a colonization society within the state because its work would be "calculated to restore . . . the unalienable right of civil liberty" to a portion of the population "who have long groaned in the most abject and cruel bondage, even in the midst of free institutions." Throughout the pages of the Repository during the organizing stages of the NHCS, there was no mention of slave revolts, no appeal to racism, nor was there any fear of a black population explosion.²⁸

Many New Hampshire citizens were pleased that a state colonization society was in the offing. A New Hampshire minister from a "distant town" commended the formation of the NHCS. For him,

every citizen of New Hampshire must act because the "enslaved African is his neighbor, and . . . God says to him, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as theyself.'" He asked that his name immediately be placed before the organizing committee as a member, and he urged the rapid formation of the NHCS.²⁹

The minister did not have a long wait, for the New Hampshire Colonization Society was formally created December 10, 1824. Like those of the parent society, the officers of the NHCS were well-known political and religious leaders. Governor David Morrill was chosen as President, the Reverend Daniel Dana of Londonderry and Jonathon Smith of Peterborough as Vice-Presidents, Samuel Fletcher of Concord as Secretary, and William Pickering of Portsmouth as Treasurer. With the exception of Dana, all the officers had served, or were serving, at the highest levels of state government.³⁰

The Reverend Daniel Dana, long associated with reform causes in the 1820's, presented the opening address at the first formal NHCS meeting, held in Concord in June, 1825. In his speech he focused on what he thought the major concerns of the Society should be-- benevolence and reform. Dana's major premise was that Christianity "aims to form the whole human race into one family of peace and love . . . a family in which sufferings shall be softened, and felicities enhanced." Yet, for Dana, America was not "one family of peace and love." On the contrary, there was not only suffering in the American Christian commonwealth, but a poisonous atmosphere of hatred, degradation, and sin. The course of this disquieting drift could be found not among the blacks, but among the whites, and the social arrangements they had constructed.

Focusing first on free blacks, Dana contended that they had become "corrupt and corrupting"; that "they do not belong" in the United States, for they were held in such low esteem. But white society and the institution of slavery had made them what they were. Blacks in the United States were not happy because "everything around them, everything they see, or hear, or feel, tells them that they are a despised, degraded race." In this sense, the famous phrase, "all men are created equal" rang hollow.

Dana went on to explain that if the free blacks were debased, the slaves were even more so. Slavery, "the blackest page in all the annals of human crime and cruelty and suffering," was not only a horrid institution for Africans, but it was also a cancerous growth on the American republic and upon the purity of American Christianity. Slavery was "the foulest blot on the face of our country; a gangrene, corroding its very vitals." The republic's indulgence in slavery was "debasing its morals and manners, enfeebling its energies, obstructing its improvements, blasting its very soil with sterility, and threatening to deluge it with blood." By indulging slavery, American citizens were contaminating themselves and straying from the path of Christian righteousness.

Dana's emphasis is instructive. True, he acknowledged that free blacks were corrupt and degraded. But he did not believe that blacks were inherently so. The nature of white American society degraded them. Noting that some Americans held that blacks belonged to another species, Dana retorted: "Cold-hearted, hateful, impious pretense!" Blacks were human beings, capable of human progress if only whites would allow them to progress. But since whites refused

to do so, colonization remained the only practical recourse. Blacks could never prosper in America because of the color of their skin. With a play on words, Dana noted that blacks were "guilty of a skin," a skin "many shades darker than our own." Sarcastically, he pointed out, that if blacks were guilty of being black, then they were undoubtedly guilty of enslaving and debasing themselves as well.

Dana was explicit in defending blacks. Yet, one is struck by his obsession with the guilt and sin of white society. Unquestionably, sin was the paramount concern in his analysis. Thus, the act of enslaving was doubly wicked: an enslaved human being lost his freedom while the enslaver lost his Christian charity. Clearly the enslaver was inviting God's wrath:

Slavery . . . is an outrage on the authority of the God in Heaven. It is a direct violation of that Eternal Law which bids us love our fellow creatures as ourselves; which bids us treat each fellow creature as another self.

In addition, Dana was impatient with those who held that southern slaveholders of the 1820's were not guilty of the sin of slavery, since they merely had inherited their slaves from their fathers and grandfathers. For Dana, "modern" slaveholders were guilty because they insisted on clinging to the sin of their fathers. All slaveholders and their defenders would remain guilty of violating God's law "until we have employed every practicable effort to rid ourselves of this evil."

Dana extended his analysis further by declaring that slavery was a national sin. If southern slaveholders were guilty, so too were northerners. In pleading for New Hampshire men to support the colonization society, Dana charged that those living "in this Northern clime [are not] exempt from that enormous guilt connected

with slavery, and the slave trade, which we are so ready to appropriate to our brethren in distant States." Indeed, New Englanders had contributed ships and sailors to "this inhuman traffick"; the forges "which have framed fetters and manacles for the limbs of unoffending Africans" were to be found in most non-slaveholding New England states. The guilt of the slave trade and of slavery was therefore a national guilt, not a sectional one. "Few," Dana continued, "few indeed, in any part of the land, have done what they could to purge themselves and their country from this foul stain." What was to be done? "Let our whole country, polluted as it is with the blood of Africa, confess its guilt, and resort to the blood of the Divine Redemer for pardon."³¹

It is clear that for Dana, and for the Repository as well, the act of colonization was an act of liberation. But liberation for whom? Clearly, the black would be liberated from his bonds. But one is forced to conclude--especially after reading Dana's plea--that the more consequential and substantial liberation would come for whites. By ending black bondage, whites would be liberated from a ghastly and unspeakable sin, one in which they had indulged for ages. By abolishing the institution and by sending blacks home, one exorcized a great evil from the land. Atonement for sins would naturally follow. In this sense, colonization was the agent of God.

The officers of the Society were so impressed with Dana's address that they decided to publish it and send copies to three hundred "gentlemen" throughout the state "who it was thought would exert their influence in favor of our object." In addition, copies were sent to churches throughout New Hampshire with the hope that a

truly Christian body would not refuse donations.³²

It is difficult to ascertain whether Dana's analysis was shared by all of the New Hampshiremen who advocated colonization. Clearly, however, others who propagated the cause in the state echoed much of his sentiment. For instance, in a stirring address delivered several months after the formation of the NHCS, the Reverend Nathaniel Bouton of Concord not only denounced northern anti-black opinion, but harshly chastised the institution of slavery as well. For Bouton, slavery was "opposed to the first principles of our Constitution . . . it stands in direct opposition to the acknowledged and boasted maxims which are the basis of our political institutions. Oh! What a solemn mockery," he cried, "does it cast upon the great instrument of our Independence." Bouton's address, like Dana's was reprinted by the Society and sold as pamphlets, netting the NHCS over twenty-two dollars.³³

Interest in colonization went beyond addresses delivered by clergymen. The effort was seriously discussed in the New Hampshire House, and articles on colonization occasionally appeared within the state's newspapers throughout the late 1820's and early 1830's. The NHCS was frequently toasted during Fourth of July ceremonies, an honor usually bestowed upon politicians, various business ventures, and the Founding Fathers. One colonizationist toasted the Society by praising its work and hoping that the time would arrive when Africans "shall be no more torn from their native land and doomed to a bondage worse than death."³⁴

In addition, the NHCS's Annual Reports echoed the sentiments of the Repository, Dana, Bouton, and others. Colonization was

important for the New Hampshire Society because it "opens the way for emancipation" and provided a basis for Christianizing Africa. Applauding the Maryland chapter for recognizing that freedom "is the natural right of all men" and that slavery "is inconsistent with the true principles of Republicanism," New Hampshire colonizationists made it apparent that their ultimate goal was to displace slavery, albeit gradually.³⁵

The society also noted that free blacks were unable to improve themselves because whites blocked their progress. Blacks were "a nuisance" and "shiftless" because they were not permitted to be anything else. Even as late as 1835, when colonizationists were under attack by abolitionists, they reiterated their earlier position that slavery was evil and that both the North and the South were equally guilty of upholding the sin.³⁶

The humanitarian and Christian stance of the New Hampshire colonizationists probably explains why the Society attracted many members from practically every region of the state. But if the geographical complexion of the Society was disparate, the social complexion was not. Like most benevolent reform organizations in New Hampshire and in the United States generally in the 1820's, members of the NHCS were overwhelmingly ex-Federalists and Congregationalists. Information on the eighteen various officers of the NHCS from 1826 to 1829 reveals that seventeen had been strong Federalist supporters, while only one was a Republican; all but three were Congregationalists. In addition, of the twenty-six ministers who ardently supported the movement, twenty-five were Congregationalists, while only one was a Baptist. This is noteworthy

because some historians have postulated that the members of benevolent reform organizations at this time were motivated by a desire to restore a moral order onto a society that was becoming increasingly democratic and pluralistic. For numerous Federalist and Congregationalist members, this democratic trend was seen as an anarchical one in the political sphere, and an heretical one in the religious sphere. The "wrong people" were gaining power at the expense of older, more established leaders.³⁷ While this remains a plausible explanation--and there is no reason to doubt that the impulse was present in the case of the NHCS--it in no way detracts from the overall benevolent and reformist tone of the state's colonizationists. Whatever their motives may have been, the colonizationists of New Hampshire were unequivocal in their attacks upon white society in general for its unjust treatment of all blacks, free and slave. It is clear, however, that the NHCS was not motivated by a fear of slave revolts or of a threatening, free black population.

The same benevolent and humanitarian impulse that attracted individuals to the NHCS also prompted them to raise funds for the enterprise. Unfortunately, while many colonizationists optimistically set about seeking donations, their financial gains fell far short of their expectations. Contributions trickled into the Society's headquarters, some from individual donors, some from various towns, and some from individual churches. But the money was never enough to fully sustain the NHCS. The largest contributions came from the southern portion of the state, especially New Ipswich, Concord, Londonderry and Hancock. These towns provided the greatest amount of money, mainly because they contained the most active clerical

supporters of the NHCS. Indeed, between June, 1826 and June, 1827, the majority of contributions came from ministers who had collected the money from their own congregations. The forthcoming money, however, was less than the previous year when the colonizationists were struggling to become a state society.³⁸ Financially, at any rate, the NHCS was never a strong society, which helps explain why it played a minor role in the national movement.

Although a contributing factor, financial difficulties did not lead to the decline of the New Hampshire Colonization Society; rather, the decline of colonization was largely the result of anti-slavery zealots who, in the 1830's, advocated the immediate, unconditional abolition of slavery. Like "Q.E.D.," most American abolitionists were convinced that colonizing free blacks in Africa was a cynical and an un-Christian ploy to guarantee the safety of southern slavery. Therefore, according to the abolitionists, those who championed black deportation were as sinful as the southern slaveholder.

Many members of the NHCS who articulated a sincere compassion for the slave and free black were shaken by the abolitionists' attacks. The works of Boston abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison had an especially sobering impact on the New Hampshire colonizationists. Garrison's criticism was so powerful that many of the state's colonizationists were forced to reassess the motives of the American Colonization Society, to acknowledge negative free black opinion, and even to question the feasibility of a permanent settlement in Liberia. Convinced that Garrison's analysis was sound, many New Hampshire colonizationists left the movement to embrace the cause of immediate abolition of slavery.

The exodus from colonization to abolitionism cut deeply into the NHCS's membership. Upon reading Garrison's stinging indictments of colonization in the Liberator and in his pamphlet, Thoughts on African Colonization, both the Secretary and Treasurer of the NHCS deserted the movement and championed abolitionism. Two "life members" of the NHCS soon followed.³⁹ In fact, those individuals most responsible for establishing the New Hampshire Anti-Slavery Society in 1834 had all been ardent colonizationists. Although not every colonizationist embraced abolitionism, enough defections to the anti-slavery cause had occurred by 1835 to seriously undermine the NHCS.⁴⁰

Although their goals were never realized, the colonizationists nevertheless left their imprint on the New Hampshire abolitionist movement. In the 1820's the NHCS served as the only organization in the state that championed the cause of free blacks and slaves. By circulating their ideas and by offering the public a remedy to the problems of slavery and race, members of the NHCS paved the way for abolitionists in the 1830's. In fact, many of the early appeals of the New Hampshire abolitionists were taken directly from the colonizationists. The most vocal members of the NHCS emphasized the sin of slavery and assured the public that blacks were capable of social advancement; they denounced the southern slaveholder and pointed to northern complicity in upholding the institution of slavery; and they recognized and deplored the existence of a society based upon racial supremacy. All of these principles were accepted by the abolitionists in the 1830's. In this regard, colonizationists should be viewed as something other than mere foils to the

abolitionists, at least in the state of New Hampshire.

Ultimately the NHCS failed despite its benevolent and humane stance. But the failure of the colonization movement was not that it was "racist" and therefore doomed to die at the feet of the more enlightened abolitionists. Rather, the failure of the colonizationists, especially after 1831, was their inability to accept the practicability of a bi-racial society. Those colonizationists in the 1820's who were reform minded were nevertheless skeptical men. Although they could denounce slavery and applaud eventual manumission, they could not envisage the integration of freed blacks into an overwhelmingly white society. They argued that once free, slaves would be at the mercy of a hostile, anti-black society. Therefore, they concluded, deportation remained the only hope for those blacks who sought to improve their position.

Here, then, was the essence of their failure. Colonizationists tacitly accepted the racial nature of white society, not once challenging the premise on which it rested. They would not--indeed, they could not--for to do so would be to undermine the social structure, a proposition that most found unacceptable considering their Federalist and Congregational background. They denounced racial prejudice and they even recognized that prejudice was a product of the social structure; yet, they were unwilling to risk changing that social structure to the extent necessary to eradicate this prejudice. For the colonizationists, deportation was the one solution that would save the blacks, redeem the Christian ideal, and keep the social structure intact.

CHAPTER I

NOTES

¹ Liberator, July 13, 1838.

² The abolitionist press harshly denounced the colonizationists as black oppressors throughout the 1830's and 1840's. See, for example, (New Hampshire) Herald of Freedom, March 7, March 14, and March 28, 1835.

³ Dwight Dumond, Anti-Slavery (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1961), p. 130.

⁴ Louis Filler, The Crusade Against Slavery (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1960), p. 22; Lawrence Friedman, "Purifying the White Man's Country: The American Colonization Society Reconsidered, 1816-1840," Societas (Winter, 1976), p. 6. While Friedman's article is the most recent interpretive study of the colonizationists, some historians have tempered their analyses by recognizing that the movement attracted individuals who believed "that they were sponsoring Christian uplift of blacks while alleviating some of slavery's most objectionable features." James Brewer Stewart, Holy Warriors (New York: Hill and Wang, 1976), p. 30. See also Gerald Sorin, Abolitionism (New York: Praeger Press, 1972), p. 40; George Fredrickson, The Black Image in the White Mind (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), pp. 9-12.

⁵ But even in the upper South there were more progressive voices than historians are willing to admit. Robert Goodloe Harper defended colonization because "it tends, and may powerfully tend, to rid us, gradually and entirely in the United States of slaves and slavery." Quoted in Fredrickson, pp. 9-10. On the structure of colonization societies see P.J. Staudenraus, The African Colonization Movement, 1816-1865 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), passim, but especially pp. 70-79.

⁶ "Constitution of the American Colonization Society," in Appendix, The Eleventh Annual Report of the American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Colour of the United States, 1828 (New York: Negro University Press, 1969), p. 94. Penelope Campbell, Maryland in Africa (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971), pp. 7-9; Staudenraus, pp. 17-35.

⁷ Staudenraus, pp. 27, 30.

⁸ Campbell, pp. 3-6; Staudenraus, pp. 1-11; Winthrop Jordan, White Over Black (Baltimore: Penguin Books, Inc., 1968), pp. 546 passim.

- 9 Staudenraus, pp. 52-54; Campbell, pp. 2-8.
- 10 Staudenraus, passim; First Annual Report, American Colonization Society, 1816.
- 11 Staudenraus, p. 15.
- 12 John C. Miller, The Wolf by the Ears (New York: The Free Press, 1977), pp. 126-27. Miller states that Gabriel was a free black; but Winthrop Jordon and others describe him as a slave. See Jordon, p. 393, and Sorin, p. 40.
- 13 Quoted in Miller, p. 134.
- 14 Quoted in Ira Berlin, Slaves Without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South (New York: Random House, 1974), p. 89.
- 15 African Repository, February, 1832.
- 16 Robert G. Harper to Elias B. Caldwell (Secretary of the American Colonization Society), August 20, 1817 in First Annual Report, American Colonization Society, p. 21.
- 17 First Annual Report, American Colonization Society, p. 8.
- 18 Ibid., p. 9.
- 19 Free black population figures for New Hampshire may be found in the Fifth United States Census, 1830, p. 134.
- 20 New Hampshire Repository, April 1, 1822. See also, Concord Observer, March 17, March 24, March 31, and April 7, 1821.
- 21 New Hampshire Repository, July 7, 1823.
- 22 Ibid., July 14, 1823.
- 23 Ibid., February 2, 1824.
- 24 Boston Recorder, as reprinted in Ibid., September 1, 1823.
- 25 Ibid., June 21, 1824.
- 26 Ibid., July 12, July 19, and November 15, 1824.
- 27 Ibid., November 15, 1824.
- 28 Ibid., November 22, 1824.
- 29 Ibid., December 13, 1824.
- 30 Ibid., December 20, 1824.

³¹ Daniel Dana, D.D., A Discourse Addressed the the New Hampshire Auxiliary Colonization Society at their First Annual Meeting, June 2, 1825.

³² Second Annual Report, New Hampshire Auxiliary Colonization Society, 1826.

³³ Nathaniel Bouton, "Christian Patriotism," July 4, 1825; Treasurer's Report, Second Annual Report, New Hampshire Colonization Society, 1826, p. 12.

³⁴ New Hampshire Patriot, July 10, 1826.

³⁵ Second Annual Report, New Hampshire Colonization Society, 1826.

³⁶ Fourth Annual Report, New Hampshire Colonization Society, 1829; Report of the Board of Managers, New Hampshire Colonization Society, June 4, 1835.

³⁷ See, for example, Clifford Griffin, Their Brothers' Keepers: Moral Stewartship in the United States, 1800-1865 (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1960); Charles I. Foster, An Exand of Mercy: The Evangelical United Front, 1790-1837 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1960). Griffin noted that leaders of the various reform organizations felt that the "spread of the Protestant gospel and the pervasive influence of Protestant morality would not only save the souls of their fellow citizens, but would restore to men and to society, stability and order, sobriety and safety." Quoted in Griffin, The Ferment of Reform, 1830-1860 (Arlington Heights: AHM Publishing, 1967), p. 20.

³⁸ Second Annual Report, New Hampshire Colonization Society, 1826; Third Annual Report, New Hampshire Colonization Society, 1827.

³⁹ Fifteenth Annual Report, American Colonization Society, p. 53.

⁴⁰ See "Records of the New Hampshire Colonization Society, 1824-1870," (unpublished, New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord).

CHAPTER II

OPPRESSION AND LIBERATION

In the autumn of 1842, New Hampshire abolitionist T. Parnell Beach was imprisoned in Lynn, Massachusetts for his disruptive outburst at a Quaker meeting. With little else to do, he began writing and reflecting on his "progress" in the anti-slavery cause. Like so many other abolitionists, Beach had remained a colonizationist even after the cry for immediate emancipation was heard throughout the country. He had ignored anti-slavery newspapers, avoided anti-slavery lectures, and openly sneered at the movement. But his conversion to abolitionism finally began in Maine through the endeavors of Stephen Fessenden who, in Beach's words, "beat into me the duty of faithfully examining the subject of anti-slavery." After "much wicked neglect" Beach read Garrison's Thoughts on African Colonization and other standard anti-slavery works. In two weeks he was a confirmed abolitionist.¹

Beach's transformation from colonizationist to abolitionist is instructive, for many abolitionists had turned from colonization in similar fashion. While the colonizationist indictment of slavery and prejudice laid the foundation for the anti-slavery movement in New Hampshire in the 1820's, many colonizationists were, like Beach, being won over to the cause of immediate emancipation by the early 1830's. Several reasons explain the growing dissatisfaction with colonization schemes. First, there had been little success with colonizing efforts. Not only was the death rate high for

early settlers in Liberia, but constant attacks by hostile tribes threatened any permanent, stable settlement. Also, the discovery that most free blacks shunned emigration seriously undermined colonizationist activity. Finally, and perhaps most disturbing, was the realization that many colonizationists, especially in the South, were not embracing the scheme out of Christian charity; rather, many adherents merely sought to rid the country of free blacks because they were a nuisance and a potential danger.² Like Beach, other New Hampshire colonizationists became aware of these disconcerting revelations only after reading William Lloyd Garrison's Boston-based paper, the Liberator, and his hostile pamphlet, Thoughts on African Colonization.

Garrison's works cannot be underestimated. As the first and most vocal advocate of immediate emancipation in New England, his ideas helped transform countless others into anti-slavery zealots. With the publication of the Liberator on January 1, 1831, Garrison launched his campaign against slavery, and in 1832, his critique of colonization was published. Both of these anti-slavery staples were circulated widely in New Hampshire, creating converts to the cause of immediatism. Many of those New Hampshire citizens who were touched by Garrison's plea informed the editor that he alone had converted them. Some were so overwhelmed by Garrison's appeal that they bought several copies of the Liberator and sent them to friends even, in one instance, to acquaintances as far away as eight hundred miles.³

Because Garrison's works were disseminated throughout the state, his attacks on the colonization society induced many to reject their

former affiliations. Many "benevolent Christians," one reader wrote from Plymouth, had accepted the argument of the colonizationists "because it was the first and only thing that they knew had been moved in behalf of the negro." But upon reflection, many began to realize that colonization perpetuated slavery, as Garrison had demonstrated.⁴ Inasmuch as Garrison's attacks were lucid and forthright--if not contentious and shrill--opposition to colonization had rapidly spread throughout the state.

While highly influential, Garrison's works did not serve as the only factor that won adherents to the cause of anti-slavery. The New York-based American Anti-Slavery Society, formed in 1833, was instrumental in circulating agents who not only disseminated the ideas of immediate abolition but also spearheaded the drive for the creation of local anti-slavery societies in many communities. Under the direction of Theodore Weld, these agents, known as "the Seventy," journeyed into most of the northern states, and in New Hampshire their efforts, like Garrison's, brought encouraging results.⁵

In New Hampshire an agent's distinctive method was to seek out a sympathetic minister in a specific town, obtain the use of his church to hold a preliminary anti-slavery meeting, and--if the audience were receptive--to organize a local abolitionist society. When the agent's task was completed, he traveled to another town and repeated the procedure. Nathaniel Southard exemplified this process. Traveling from Massachusetts to northern New Hampshire, Southard delivered an anti-slavery address in Concord, Hebron, Lyme, and other small towns, urging the citizens in each one to create a society. Because his listeners in most towns were enthusiastic, he

reported optimistically that the state would eventually be "abolitionized," even though it "was not first in the field."⁶

Other agents journeyed across the state enjoying similar results. Both the Reverend George Storrs, a Methodist minister and agent for the AASS, and George Thompson, a severe English critic of slavery, traversed the state leaving newly-created anti-slavery societies in their wake. Thompson, for instance, was pleased to find enthusiastic audiences, especially in the mill towns of Dover and Somersworth. Because all but one of the ministers in Dover were "devoted in heart and understanding to our holy enterprise" the creation of both a Male and Female society was accomplished with relative ease. His efforts were so successful that membership in the Dover societies climbed to over four hundred soon after Thompson left the area.⁷

With Garrison's writings disseminating throughout the state and with the activities of the anti-slavery agents becoming increasingly visible, New Hampshire residents could no longer ignore the cause of immediate emancipation. Indeed, by December, 1836, forty-one town and two county anti-slavery societies existed in the state, attesting to the fact that the movement was not merely the product of a few exotic minds residing in far-away Boston or New York. The visibility of anti-slavery was heightened by noisy debates held between abolitionists and colonizationists, especially in the early years when the first abolitionist societies were formed. There was little question over the outcome of the debates, since those in attendance were mostly pro-abolitionist, although a few colonizationists could always be expected to attend. The Concord

Anti-Slavery Society, for instance, was formed at the close of one of these "spirited discussions." The questions "Is the Colonization Society worthy of the patronage of the Christian community?" and "Ought slavery in the United States . . . be immediately abolished?" were debated in Concord and, according to one abolitionist, the supporters of colonization "behaved somewhat unseemly, but the truth was victorious."⁸

Debates between the champions of colonization and abolition also extended into various New Hampshire academies and schools, some reminiscent of the uproar at Lane Seminary in Cincinnati where abolitionist supporters defied their instructors by forming an anti-slavery society. In the summer of 1834, students at the New Hampton Academical and Theological Institution, following the example at Lane, held enthusiastic anti-slavery meetings. Indeed, the abolitionist forces were so strong at this outpost of Freewill Baptism that after a series of protracted anti-colonization meetings one student was moved to state boldly that "I believe there cannot be found an individual in the Institution who will openly advocate the atrocious objects of the American Colonization Society." Widespread and growing anti-colonization sentiment at the Academy was even more significant because the local minister--"a stanch [sic] defender of ultra-colonization sentiments"--had denied the students use of his chapel.⁹

Clearly, abolitionism was gaining strength in New Hampshire at the expense of colonizationism. The Reverend David Root of Dover noted:

The Colonization Society, we had supposed, to have no concern with Slavery. It professes not to touch the subject of

emancipation. . . . Whatever might have been the views of some of its founders, (and, no doubt they were in the highest degree benevolent,) as a remedy for slavery, we had supposed it now given up.¹⁰

If colonization sentiment were declining, it was not altogether dead in the Granite State, even though "many of its best and warmest supporters have forsaken it for the great and efficient principle of immediate, unconditional emancipation."¹¹ Although only remnants of the state's colonization society remained by the mid-1830's, most abolitionists believed that its stubborn supporters constituted an embarrassment for New Hampshire. One abolitionist wondered if "the N.H. Colonization Society will degrade our State by holding its annual meeting this year, and pollute the already [polluted N.H.] Observer with an account of its proceedings?"¹²

It was in this context of ebbing colonization sentiment and growing abolitionist activity that the New Hampshire Anti-Slavery Society (NHASS) was formed. Although the groundwork was laid for the state society in November, 1834, the first convention was held at Concord on June 4, 1835.¹³ With a number of nationally known abolitionists in attendance, the delegates passed denunciatory resolutions on slavery, discussed the evils of colonization, and urged every town in the state to form a local society. In addition, they enthusiastically endorsed the Herald of Freedom, issued several months prior to the formation of the NHASS by "an association of Gentlemen." This new journal constituted the only paper "throughout the borders of New Hampshire that will open its columns freely and fully to his [the slave's] plea."¹⁴ Under the editorship of twenty-one year-old Joseph Horace Kimball, the Herald took a forceful stance against slavery and would soon serve as a rallying point for

the state's abolitionists.

With the NHASS providing an institutional framework and with the Herald of Freedom circulating from the seacoast to the northernmost regions of the state, New Hampshire abolitionists were able to articulate their feelings about slavery and slave society with the realization that it would be heard by "slumbering" residents. The substance of their message, however, was not unique. Clearly, a degree of uniformity existed within their publicly-stated ideology, their assumptions about both northern and southern society, and the nature of their attack upon slavery. This was especially evident in the early and mid-1830's; but even in the late 1830's and 1840's when bitter factional disputes ultimately led to an institutional split, abolitionists from various groups and regions shared certain basic tenets that were unaffected by their internecine struggles. Individual anti-slavery papers fostered much of this homogeneity of ideas and assumptions by reprinting editorials from other papers. The Liberator, Herald of Freedom, and the New York-based Emancipator--newspapers which were rapidly making inroads throughout the entire New England region--each reprinted pieces from the others. Hence, ideas and attitudes postulated in one location were certain to be aired--and most likely to be accepted--in another. It was within this context, then, that New Hampshire abolitionists joined their compatriots and embarked upon a concerted attack against slavery and the system it bolstered.

The abolitionists in New Hampshire--as elsewhere--attacked slavery on both the religious and secular fronts, and the two

approaches were linked by the concept of "oppression." In religious terms, slavery was a mortal sin because it oppressed and cruelly exploited a portion of God's children; in secular terms the backward, aristocratic South oppressed an economically sophisticated and democratic North, and a large portion of its own people as well. To end slavery was on the one hand to liberate human beings reduced to chattel, and on the other to liberate a nation held captive by an autocratic minority. The institution was at once a violation of Christian principles and an obstacle to progress, democracy, and freedom.

The religious critique of anti-slavery was the more pronounced, especially in the early 1830's. The most frequent charge made by the New Hampshire abolitionists was that slavery constituted "a heinous sin against God." They could easily agree with their colonizationist predecessors that any system that held men in bonds was an affront to God, and that if the nation tolerated such an evil, all its citizens--both north and south--were tainted with sin.

The theme of sin was repeated incessantly at anti-slavery conventions, in local constitutions, and in newspapers. The opening resolution at the organizational meeting of the New Hampshire Anti-Slavery Society declared "that slaveholding is a heinous sin against God and ought therefore to be immediately and forever abolished." On another occasion, the Reverend David Root of Dover argued that there was no sin "condemned by Scripture in more severe and unmeasured terms than that of slavery." The Dover Ladies Anti-Slavery Society proclaimed that slavery was "a gross violation of the laws of God" and must therefore be abolished.¹⁵

This theme was so frequently repeated that it threatened to subsume valuable convention time that could be used for other, more concrete purposes. In 1837 Garrison warned his fellow abolitionists to spend less time with the "sin" of slavery and more on the practical resolutions of the problem.¹⁶ After 1837 it no longer was the central focus for the New Hampshire abolitionists. At the same time Nathaniel P. Rogers, future editor of the Herald, advised that abolitionists should do more than merely articulate an anti-slavery creed. Hostility toward slavery should not be confined to the abstract "for there it is harmless," but "in the concrete; in the application to men's limbs, bodies, and souls."¹⁷

To be abolitionists "in the concrete" meant taking specific action. But how did one take action against the sin of slavery in small New England towns? New Hampshire abolitionists were far removed from the institution so they could not strike it directly. They did, however, take advantage of the one institution that enabled them to touch it at least indirectly--the church. With the aid of abolitionist ministers or those who were sympathetic to the cause, abolitionists began passing resolutions in church gatherings to withhold Christian fellowship from slaveholders and to exclude from the pulpit and sacraments those sympathetic to slavery. The Reverend David Stowell of Goffstown, an early abolitionist and Congregational minister, held a church meeting in which he helped pass resolutions condemning slavery as a sin and affirming that the Goffstown Congregational Church "cannot conscientiously admit to our communion any one who is either a slaveholder, a slave-dealer, or a slave driver."¹⁸ New Hampshire Anti-Slavery agent George Storrs, noting

that the Congregational church in Acton, Massachusetts closed its pulpit to slaveholders, urged New Hampshire churches to follow suit because Christians should not allow those who practice "heaven-daring sins" to participate in any church.¹⁹

At least one church in each of the forty-one towns boasting anti-slavery societies formally announced that their doors would be closed to those who were even partially tainted with "the heinous sin of slavery."²⁰ It can be argued that this form of anti-slavery activity was not entirely satisfactory or even practical because the chances were remote that a slaveholder would travel to New Hampshire in order to deliver a sermon or partake in the sacraments. But New Hampshire abolitionists--as well as other New England abolitionists--embraced this form of action because it was a familiar mode of protest which went as far back as the jeremiads preached by their Puritan forebears. Similarly, anti-slavery action by the church was not as futile as it would appear because some denominations did have connections with the South through either a national organization or through a vague network of spiritual and intellectual ties. The closing of church doors to slaveholders and their northern apologists, as well as the numerous resolutions passed by religious bodies, were recorded and sent either to the national body or, where a national organization was weak or non-existent, to select southern spokesmen for a particular denomination.²¹ By notifying their "southern brethren" that northern Christians would not tolerate the sin to stain their church, they hoped southerners would be moved to end slavery. Churches, as one abolitionist minister insisted, had a moral responsibility to break the chains

of slavery and, if need be, to disassociate themselves from southern churches and the national organization.²² Consequently, viewed in this light, abolitionism "in the abstract" could be transformed into positive action. What better place to help eradicate a sin than in God's house?

In addition, religious action could effect individual communicants and, presumably through them, a slaveholding church. For example, Mary Thompson of Durham sought to join a Presbyterian church in Maysville, Kentucky, to where she was about to move. She requested a customary letter of introduction and testament of faith from the Reverend Alvan Tobey, her Congregational minister in Durham, to the minister in Maysville. After some reflection Tobey informed Thompson that "the circumstances are somewhat peculiar" because she was leaving a church in a free state and seeking membership in a church that resided in a slave state. This was a sensitive issue because certain members of the Presbyterian church in Maysville "probably" were slaveholders. Tobey pointed out that "probably" most of the members in the Maysville church saw no harm in this practice. "But if a church and its pastor should defend slavery as right, as a good institution, and its members should hold slaves and manage them for purposes of gain, like any property, it is hardly probable that we should think it right to have fellowship with them. . . ." As long as slavery was "probably" tolerated in the Maysville church, then Mary Thompson would not receive Tobey's support. She left town without his letter.²³

The assault on "negrophobia" was closely tied to the religious attack on slavery. New Hampshire abolitionists recognized that

America was in fact a "white man's country," and, as such, was in direct violation of God's law. Hence, for most abolitionists negrophobia was no less a sin than slavery. As Americans, free blacks deserved the same rights in this country as whites. Therefore, the New Hampshire abolitionists unremittingly attacked prejudice and anti-black attitudes. Some of their criticism was mawkish and sentimental, but most was surprisingly sophisticated. Free blacks were oppressed just as slaves, and the term "free" was meaningless because in actuality "the iron heel of the tyrant is on his heart," wrote J. Horace Kimball, editor of the Herald of Freedom. Whites hated blacks because from their youth whites were taught that blacks were "different." Once inculcated at an early age, negrophobia usually remained with whites the rest of their lives. Some of the attitudes passed on to a younger generation appeared to be quite harmless, but the result was insidious negrophobia nevertheless. A mother tells her "unquiet" children "strange tales" of the black man. Babies are put to sleep by their nurses' negro ditties, and few children dared to venture out at night because they were taught that blacks were "lurking" in the paths and behind trees. For Kimball, all of these "harmless" childhood stereotypes had one devastating effect: "We grow up to manhood with a feeling of hatred and scorn burning in our bosoms against the Negro."²⁴

Echoing Kimball's sentiments, one abolitionist noted that mothers "should be apprised that they are exerting, though 'a silent and unostentatious,' yet powerful influence in society." Mothers could help eradicate negrophobia by exerting a great deal of influence on the education of their young. Because maternal influence was

one of the most powerful forces in life, mothers should take positive action against this sin of prejudice:

Instead of speaking of the colored man to their children as an object of terror, and holding him up before their minds as a scarecrow or bugbear to frighten them into obedience; instead of teaching them by precept and example to regard him and his children as creatures far beneath them, with whom it would be debasing to associate; they might tell them he is a man, to whom his and their Maker saw meet to give a skin different from their own, but who is nevertheless entitled to the same kind treatment, the same respect, that he would be entitled to were he a white man.²⁵

In a similar vein, the New Hampshire abolitionists reacted sharply to the white fears of amalgamation, usually with scorn. Upon learning that R.R. Gurley, Secretary of the American Colonization Society, had denounced amalgamation, Nathaniel P. Rogers of Plymouth responded by attempting to "quiet the marriage-dreading Secretary." Rogers sarcastically reminded Gurley "that the colored man, when freed, can consult his own sovereign taste in the choice of his bride; . . . It will always 'take two to make' the horrid 'bargain.'"²⁶

In order to help the free black overcome negrophobia by providing educational opportunities, New Hampshire abolitionists created the Noyes Academy in the town of Canaan. Although short-lived (see Chapter IV), the Academy was a model of integrated education which attracted such future black luminaries as Henry Highland Garnet and Thomas Paul among others. According to one advertisement, the school was "open to youths of good character without distinction of color." In addition, there would be "liberal and just views in regard to the colored portion of our countrymen." The abolitionists hoped Noyes Academy would prove that once blessed with proper education, any man could rise, including the hated northern free black.²⁷

Taking their mission of integrated education seriously, abolitionists in the Canaan area and throughout central Grafton County, began to house the black students in their homes, at considerable risk to themselves and to their property. Many abolitionists also made it a point to escort blacks to church and to be seen in public with them. These activities offended the sensibilities of most non-abolitionists, and denunciations of the abolitionists and Noyes Academy were numerous in state and local papers. Fearful that the presence of free blacks in Canaan would lead to "race mongrelization," townsmen organized a committee to tear down the school soon after it was opened.²⁸ For the New Hampshire abolitionists, this reaction to free blacks merely underscored the degree to which the sin of slavery had infected the North.

The religious nature of the abolitionist crusade should not be underestimated because it served as the central focus of the movement, especially in the early 1830's. But there was a secular criticism advanced by the movement as well and, in this vein, abolitionists denounced the South in social, economic, and political terms. The anti-slavery crusade became more than a movement to free black slaves; it was a crusade to save northern liberties and economic advancements from the evil influence of an oppressive and arrogant minority.

In social terms, the abolitionists perceived themselves as members of a northern "middle class" fighting against the encroachments of an outmoded aristocracy. Southern aristocracy was built upon the institution of slavery and both could be eradicated by middle class abolitionists. To be sure, the concept of a middle

class is a vague one, but it was employed by the abolitionists. In a letter read before a cheering 1836 NHASS convention, Judge William Jay noted that pro-slavery men in both the North and the South sought to destroy Christianity and liberty, but they would ultimately fail because "the middle class of society, uncorrupted by commercial avarice and political intrigue, will rally around the standard of abolition," thwarting such actions.²⁹ Moreover, as will be illustrated below, by attacking groups at both ends of the social spectrum, they at least implicitly--and perhaps unconsciously--placed themselves in some middle category of society.

According to the abolitionists, slavery bred laziness and idleness in the master, traits associated with southern aristocracy and not with the industriousness of northern republicanism. In a sarcastic poem, Garrison wrote:

For unless we can kidnap and purchase at pleasure,
we must do our own labor, and sport--when we've leisure;
Oh! shocking the thought, that these delicate hands,
Must take hold of the plough, and cultivate lands.³⁰

"A northern farmer" writing in the Herald pointed out in more serious tones that "slavery tends to place property in the hands of the few, to create an aristocracy founded upon wealth. We have always been taught . . . that such aristocracy is inconsistent with the genius of our republican institutions." Simple Yankee farmers, far from being wealthy, were nevertheless morally superior to the southern slaveholders because they would never deprive another human being of his earnings. Furthermore, Yankees knew the value of hard work--an attribute glaringly absent from the southern aristocracy's cultural milieu. White slaveholders could, if need be, work in the broiling sun just as readily as black slaves, but "those who have

been habituated to idleness and luxurious modes of life are doubtless unwilling to work."³¹

The abolitionist attacks on aristocracy were not confined to the South. Abolitionists insisted that an aristocracy also existed within the commercial and mercantile community of the North, and abolitionists were convinced that this northern aristocracy was just as guilty of upholding slavery as the southern aristocracy. While abolitionists did not condemn all mercantile and commercial endeavors, --in fact they were able to praise commerce in general (see below)-- they were quick to chastise those very wealthy merchants who engaged in the southern trade because they were indirectly profiting from the institution of slavery. Northern merchants "and all through whose hands the gain of slavery passes" were fearful that abolitionism would disrupt their business with the South.³² Noting that wealthy merchants were continually denouncing abolitionism because it threatened the Union, the abolitionists retorted that the only "union" that worried the merchants "was in reality their union with the southern trade."³³ The major obstacles to abolition according to the Strafford County Anti-Slavery Society were "INTEREST!" and "AVARICE!" manifested in both the North and the South. The slaveholder needed the institution to sustain his wealth and way of life, while the aristocratic "northern merchant is driving a lucrative trade with the South and he fears interruption." The merchant's profits from inter-regional trade meant "more to him than the freedom of his countrymen."³⁴

Often abolitionists found themselves unable to persuade wealthy merchants--men of "standing and property"--to embrace their cause.

Traveling throughout the seacoast area of New Hampshire, anti-slavery agent Henry B. Stanton noted that he was well-received in most communities, but he had encountered very little support in Portsmouth, the bastion of "aristocratic" merchants. "The anti-aristocratical principles of abolitionism," he wrote, "have made but little progress, as yet, in this town."³⁵ Justifiably or otherwise, abolitionists had long recognized that northern aristocrats displayed little love for blacks. Noting that a Massachusetts Superior Court had ruled in favor of a fugitive slave, John Farmer asked with obvious satisfaction, "What will the aristocracy say to this?"³⁶

The abolitionists were especially frustrated with the behavior of northern politicians, a class of men that the abolitionists felt sustained southern aristocracy. Democrats especially were either too weak to confront southern arrogance or were too practical to do so for fear of losing political office or, at the very least, losing allies in Congress. In New Hampshire, Democrats came under fire for defending the rights of southern aristocrats. New Hampshire Senator Henry Hubbard received an "open" letter in the press from an abolitionist excoriating him for placating an insolent southern aristocracy. "Had a foreigner . . . heard your speech . . . he would doubtless have concluded that you were a representative, not of New England republican principles, but of the Southern aristocratic doctrine."³⁷ The letter was representative, for in the 1830's and 1840's, every Democratic Governor and Senator from the state was vilified in the abolitionist press for aligning himself with the "slave power" while ignoring the legitimate interests of the "free state of New Hampshire."

While the abolitionists could easily denounce northern and southern aristocracy, they had difficulty accepting the fact that many laborers were doing the same. As a group, abolitionists took a dim view of working-class radicalism, and by attacking workers as they had attacked the aristocracy, they boldly underscored their middle-class character and their middle class world-view.

In the early 1830's Garrison noted that an attempt was being made to "enflame the minds of our working classes against the more opulent, and to persuade men that they are condemned and oppressed by a wealthy aristocracy." True, "public grievances" did exist, but "they are not confined to any one class of society." He had always been a friend of various reforms, "but this is not reform."³⁸

The Boston abolitionist held firm to his views, even when challenged by outspoken workingmen. One writer tried in vain to persuade the editor that there was a similarity between workingmen's parties and the abolitionists--while Garrison was educating people about the evils of slavery, so too were workingmen's parties, only their slavery was in reference to "another portion of our fellow man." Slaves and workers were alike: both were kept in ignorance and both were the victims of injustice that inevitably engendered vice, indolence, and depravity.³⁹ Garrison retorted that there were indeed abuses in society, but "the worst enemies of the people" were those who inculcated the "pernicious doctrine" that the "opulent" were the natural enemies of the "poor and vulgar." Commercial enterprise, he intoned, was not "as a body" hostile to the interests of the laboring classes. In fact, commerce assisted the worker because it provided employment that ultimately served to advance him in

society. There were, Garrison acknowledged, individual cases where working people found themselves being exploited. But, for Garrison, it was folly to condemn the entire system; "shall individual cases condemn the whole body?"⁴⁰

In a more fevered reaction, Garrison chose to respond to a workie by quoting Edmund Burke; "'Those who attempt to level, never equalize.'" Paraphrasing Burke, Garrison noted that in any society there must be people in position of esteem and importance. Those who challenged this assumption were perverting the natural order of society.⁴¹

Whether all abolitionists in New Hampshire accepted Garrison's arguments en toto is difficult to determine. But their silence on the workers' plight suggests that they were not entirely convinced--or even aware--that there was a problem. In a state that was rapidly being transformed by industry, and where militant women factory workers were stalking out of Dover mills in 1834 denouncing their condition as "wage slavery," some of the states' abolitionists chose to concern themselves with the evils of eating meat and the "Catholic menace" instead of the workers' condition. For New Hampshire abolitionists, the workers' fight was not theirs.⁴²

An incident at Somersworth is illustrative. In the summer of 1836, a young boy was given twelve lashes after he threw a piece of metal into a machine to stop the mill. The Village Journal, a pro-abolitionist paper, wrote an editorial lauding the boy's deserved punishment. The paradox was not lost upon the Jacksonian New Hampshire Patriot, which caustically noted that the Journal's editor spent his time "absorbed by the black slaves of the South,

[yet] has none left for the White slaves who toil at the mills of soulless corporations. . . ."43

In fairness to Garrison, he did begin to reprint more articles on the plight of the working man in the late 1830's, and, by 1840, he could declare that the Chartist agitation in England was just. However, even in his lukewarm support he issued a proviso, stating that those Chartists who tried to convert British anti-slavery meetings into pro-Chartist ones were "both dastardly and criminal."<44 Likewise, after 1840, the radical wing of the NHASS, led by Nathaniel P. Rogers, initiated attacks on the plight of workers, albeit infrequently. But in the 1830's abolitionists could find little sentiment for workers. By registering their indifference toward workers and their hostility toward northern and southern "aristocrats," the abolitionists had defined their own position in society. Clearly, the interests of both groups were inimical to the interests of middle-class abolitionists. If the nation--indeed, the world--were to be recast, it would be accomplished at the behest of the American (and northern) middle class.

The abolitionists' middle-class outlook was most clearly revealed in their censure of the southern economic system and their glorification of technological and economic progress in the North. For the abolitionists, the continuation of the one could seriously endanger the other. The very nature of slavery was unmistakably at the root of the entire problem: the institution caused idleness in the master, which in turn made slave labor less profitable because the master was not willing to explore new avenues to increase his productivity. So long as the master class was kept in comfort, it

would not embark upon economic and technological experimentation. This, in turn, posed problems for the North mainly because the southern aristocracy, with its archaic system, tended to serve as a barrier to northern aspirations for economic progress. The editor of the People's Advocate, a New Hampshire abolitionist newspaper of the 1840's, bemoaned the fact that slavery's "Anaconda folds embrace the commerce, the manufacturers, the agriculture, and indeed every interest of the country, and crush all into one distorted mass." Slavery must be destroyed because it "has dragged the South down to bankruptcy, and it now lays hold on the North for a prey," and would destroy the North as it had the South.⁴⁵ Nathaniel P. Rogers was more abrupt: "New England industry is in vassalage to Southern slaveholding."⁴⁶

How could a system confined to the South endanger the economic interests of the North? Mainly through national political power. Through politics, southerners exerted an inordinate amount of power, which, according to the abolitionists, made the North "a conquered province." By 1840, only three Presidents had been non-slaveholders, while most of the Supreme Court justices were openly sympathetic to slavery. Furthermore, the three-fifths clause of the Constitution served to over-represent the South in Congress.⁴⁷ The New York-based Emancipator claimed that two counties in New York with a total of 40,000 voters chose five Representatives, while 49,000 voters in Virginia chose twenty.⁴⁸

Such over-representation presented a serious threat to northerners because an agricultural South, if powerful enough, could slow down or even sabotage economic and industrial progress. Because the South

was over-represented, the "slave power has moulded the measures of the national government in all its internal regulations, and its political economy, in subservience to the wishes of the slaveholders, and in opposition to the interests and general wishes of the non-slaveholding States."⁴⁹ Every vital and necessary course for commercial and industrial happiness was blocked by the backward slaveholders. The "slave power" was responsible for destroying the Bank of the United States "at its pleasure" and had generally "proscribed and prohibited foreign commerce." More dangerously, "it has manifestly sought to preserve the balance of power between the impoverished South, and the more prosperous and industrious North by crippling the energies of the latter, and reducing them, as nearly as possible, to the level of the former." Northern business connections with "the pauperized South" had led and would continue to lead to "mercantile and financial losses to the free North." Abolitionists suggested that by abolishing slavery, northerners could guard against financial ruin brought about by an over-represented aristocratic slave power.⁵⁰

The abolitionists clearly viewed the South as an economic backwater which eventually threatened to subsume northern manufacturing interests. Economic progress could never be fully realized as long as slavery existed. Yet, the superiority of northern business and industry was evident because of the rapid technological progress which was so blatantly missing in the South. This technological progress was the lynch-pin to the abolitionists' secular criticism. It proved that only a society based upon free labor and economic growth could produce sophisticated items that would benefit the

entire world.

It is apparent that as a group the abolitionists approved of the growing industrialization and transformation of society. Certainly they spent much time praising it and reaping its rewards. Whether it were internal improvements, steam power, or the emerging railroads, the abolitionists fervently praised such activity and growth.

Nathaniel P. Rogers, New Hampshire's leading abolitionist in the late 1830's, gave a Fourth of July toast as early as 1824 lauding the plans to construct the Winnebepesaukee canal, which would connect the Atlantic with the central lakes region: "May the thirsty ocean," he declared, "soon drink, through its channel, the clear waters of the Little Squam."⁵¹ Sixteen years later in Edinburg Scotland, Rogers told an enthusiastic crowd that the promise of steam power was incalculable because it brought people closer together and made the world smaller.⁵² William Lloyd Garrison echoed these sentiments by noting that the ocean would rapidly become "a great thoroughfare," thanks to the progress of steam power. People, goods, and ideas could travel uninterrupted throughout the world.⁵³

With the advent of the railroad, abolitionists found a most important northern technological achievement to praise. Garrison lauded any new railroad construction, noting that time and space would be practically annihilated.⁵⁴ Rogers likewise had consistent praise for the Concord Railroad, calling it a "truly magnificent enterprise." By connecting regions, towns, and people, the cause of anti-slavery would certainly be advanced in New Hampshire. Moreover, it would bring goods and services to individuals who had never before traveled beyond their isolated towns and villages. The Concord

Railroad connected the seacoast with the state capital, but Rogers urged it to be further extended westward into the Connecticut Valley and to the north, thereby connecting the entire state.⁵⁵ Upon hearing of the Concord Railroad, Garrison exuberantly proclaimed: "Success to all railroad enterprises the world over!"⁵⁶ Massachusetts abolitionist Francis Jackson had more than an intellectual attachment to the railroads. Writing to John Farmer, Secretary of the NHASS, he related that he had made a contract with the Lowell Railroad to remove "three little hills" which were to be carted away at the rate of 1000 loads per day "to prepare the termination of the Lowell and Worcester line." While he felt uncomfortable leveling the hills--they were a "Garden of Green"--he nevertheless made the contract. He would not stand in the way of progress.⁵⁷

Certain abolitionist leaders in New Hampshire not only praised economic and technological progress but, like Francis Jackson, took an active part in it, even if that meant siding with their critics. George Kent, Albe Cady, John Farmer, and Nathaniel Currier--all leading abolitionists--found themselves forming business and industrial alliances with their most outspoken opponents. Albe Cady served on the Board of Directors of the New Hampshire Fire Insurance Company along with Cyrus Barton, the noted vitriolic anti-abolitionist and Democratic publisher of the New Hampshire Patriot. Isaac Hill, another anti-abolitionist Democrat and Governor of the state, sided with Barton and abolitionist George Kent in pushing plans for the Concord Railroad. Hill and Kent also served on the Board of Directors of the Bow Canal corporation. In forming a Grafton County Railroad company, Nathaniel Currier of Canaan, a leading proponent of the

Noyes Academy, worked with two other Canaanites who participated in attacking the "nigger school." Abolitionist John Farmer also sat on the Board of Directors.⁵⁸

The number of corporations in which leading abolitionists and leading Democrats shared mutual concerns is numerous. The paradox is clear: while denouncing the New Hampshire Democrats for bolstering the slave power, abolitionists in turn found them to be appropriate business partners. Likewise, while Democrats decried the dissolution of the Union due to the fanatical crusades of "nigger lovers," they found men of anti-slavery principles to be suitable business partners. Obviously the abolitionist commitment to economic enterprise, industrial growth, and personal aggrandizement was so strong that they could swallow their religious and moral scruples to work with their adversaries.

Whatever the case, it is clear that, as a group, the abolitionists were pleased with the growing industrialization and economic sophistication of northern society. Attuned to their own era rather than some vanishing past, they sought changes that would guarantee not only progress in the present, but in the future as well. As such, they attacked slavery, which oppressed not only a segment of God's children, but also an entire region that was identified with political freedom and economic progress. For, as the Strafford County Anti-Slavery Society declared:

The point is soon to be settled whether we shall give up our own freedom to preserve the present system of oppression, or this system of oppression be abolished to secure the perpetuity, liberty, and prosperity of this great nation.⁵⁹

Clearly, the abolitionists viewed themselves as Christian, middle-class reformers who were crusading to end oppression in

America. By destroying slavery they hoped to destroy the source of oppression in both religious and secular life. If the black slave would be liberated, so too would the white northerner who glorified progress, industry, and democracy.

CHAPTER II

NOTES

- ¹ Liberator, October 21, 1842.
- ² These concerns were expressed in Herald of Freedom, May 2, 1835.
- ³ Liberator, May 12, 1832; May 16, 1835; January 1, 1831.
- ⁴ Ibid., November 16, 1833. See also, Ibid., November 30, 1833.
- ⁵ On the role of anti-slavery agents see John Meyers, "The Beginning of Antislavery Agencies in New Hampshire, 1832-1835," Historical New Hampshire (Fall, 1970), pp. 3-25.
- ⁶ Liberator, February 1, 1834.
- ⁷ Herald of Freedom, March 7, 1835; Liberator, December 4, 1834 and September 19, 1835. Commenting on Storrs' activities, John Greenleaf Whittier noted that "The seed which he has sown has fallen upon a soil which will bring forth its fruits in due season." Whittier to John Farmer, August 14, 1836, John Farmer Papers, New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord (hereafter, NHHS).
- ⁸ Liberator, June 14 and June 21, 1834.
- ⁹ Ibid., August 23, 1834.
- ¹⁰ Herald of Freedom, March 7, 1835.
- ¹¹ Ibid., June 27, 1835.
- ¹² John Le Bosquete to John Farmer, May 28, 1835, John Farmer Papers, NHHS. Evidently the colonization meeting was held, for the Herald of Freedom declared it to be "a farce." Herald of Freedom, June 13, 1835.
- ¹³ Liberator, November 1, 1834; Herald of Freedom, May 2, May 16, and June 13, 1835; Liberator, May 30, 1835.
- ¹⁴ Herald of Freedom, March 7, 1835. Samuel May, Henry B. Stanton and A.A. Phelps were nationally known abolitionists in attendance. Liberator, June 13, 1835.
- ¹⁵ Liberator, November 29, 1834; Herald of Freedom, March 7, 1835; "Preamble and Constitution," Records of the Ladies Anti-Slavery Society of Dover, 1835, NHHS.

16 William Lloyd Garrison to John Farmer, June 6, 1837, in Louis Ruchames, The Letters of William Lloyd Garrison, Vol. II (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 264.

17 Liberator, March 8, 1834.

18 Herald of Freedom, June 27, 1835. See also, Liberator, July 11, 1835.

19 Herald of Freedom, April 18, 1835.

20 All the churches which passed these anti-slavery resolutions notified the Herald of Freedom. See, for example, Herald of Freedom, June 2, 1836.

21 See, for example, Benjamin Chase, History of Old Chester (Auburn, N.H.: n.p., 1869), p. 342; also, "Preamble of the Constitution of the Anti-Slavery Society in New Hampshire [Methodist] Conference," reprinted in Liberator, September 19, 1835.

22 Herald of Freedom, June 13, 1835.

23 Quoted in Everett Stackpole, History of the Town of Durham, New Hampshire (Concord: Rumford Press, 1913), p. 254.

24 Herald of Freedom, March 21, 1835.

25 Ibid., March 7, 1835.

26 Liberator, July 25, 1835.

27 Herald of Freedom, March 7, 1835.

28 New Hampshire Patriot, September 7, 1835; August 22, 1835.

29 Herald of Freedom, June 11, 1836.

30 Liberator, April 9, 1831.

31 Herald of Freedom, May 21, 1835.

32 "American Anti-Slavery Society," Abstract of the Third Annual Report, cited in Ibid., May 21, 1836.

33 Ibid.

34 Ibid.

35 Liberator, October 1, 1836.

36 John Farmer to J. Horace Kimball, August 29, 1836, John Farmer Papers, NHHS.

- 37 Herald of Freedom, May 21, 1836.
- 38 Liberator, January 1, 1831.
- 39 Ibid., January 29, 1831.
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 Ibid., February 5, 1831.
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- 46 Liberator, March 18, 1834.
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CHAPTER III

THE SOCIAL COMPOSITION OF NEW HAMPSHIRE ABOLITIONISM

In an effort to show the world that the anti-slavery movement was advancing, the abolitionist press in New Hampshire, as elsewhere, frequently and proudly reported the ever-growing number of individual abolitionists, the number of state, county, and town anti-slavery societies, and the number of various anti-slavery petition-signers. This self-conscious concern with numerical strength was perhaps due to the fact that the American anti-slavery movement attracted a comparatively small group of individuals and every gain, however slight, was viewed as a remarkable achievement. Because of their interest in--indeed, obsession with--numbers, it is not surprising that abolitionists made little effort to understand or analyze the social composition of their movement. An individual's social rank, religious preference, or political affiliation was not important, so long as one more voice was raised in demanding immediate freedom for the slave. Occasionally, the abolitionist press would announce that the movement attracted people from all segments of society, both political parties, and every religious denomination. But such claims were rare: for the most part, abolitionists were content to report only the numerical strength of their crusade.

If abolitionists neglected to examine the social make-up of their movement, others did not. The stridently anti-abolitionist Democratic press scornfully observed that the anti-slavery movement

consisted of Whig politicians from aristocratic Federalist and Congregational backgrounds. The Patriot noted that no "Jackson man" could be found among its members, and where the Democratic party was strong, abolitionism failed to take root.¹

Several historians likewise have attempted to analyze the composition of the abolitionist movement, albeit in more sophisticated terms. Differing with the Patriot, Gilbert Barnes has noted that in New England, and especially in New Hampshire, abolitionists were mainly from relatively poor, small-town Baptist and Methodist communities in the northern portion of the state. David Donald has suggested that most New England abolitionists were a "declining elite" from wealthier small towns or rural areas who were unable to cope with the rapidly changing socio-economic structure in ante-bellum America. For him, most reformers--including abolitionists--came from a "Congregational-Presbyterian" and Federalist-Whig milieu. Donald has been challenged by numerous historians, most recently by James Brewer Stewart, who suggests that instead of experiencing declining fortunes, abolitionists generally were able to substantially improve their economic and social position in society. However, most scholars agree with Donald that abolitionists were firmly grounded in a Federalist-Whig tradition.²

While these historians and others have contributed to a greater understanding of the abolitionists' social boundaries, differences in scope and methodology have resulted in contradictory conclusions. Therefore, it is the purpose of this chapter to determine which of these findings--if any--best explains the social composition of New Hampshire abolitionism.

The starting point for any extended examination should begin with those towns where anti-slavery societies were present. By labelling communities that contained an anti-slavery society as "abolitionist towns" and those with no anti-slavery society as "non-abolitionist towns," it will be possible to investigate the differences between--or similarities of--the two groups. Through the isolation of certain characteristics common to one group, but weak or non-existent in the other one, a more refined portrait of the social foundations of abolitionism should emerge. Answers to several simple questions can throw considerable light on the anti-slavery movement. For instance, how did the 41 towns that boasted anti-slavery societies differ from the remaining 165 towns? What features best explain the social composition of abolitionism at the town level? What set the two groups apart?

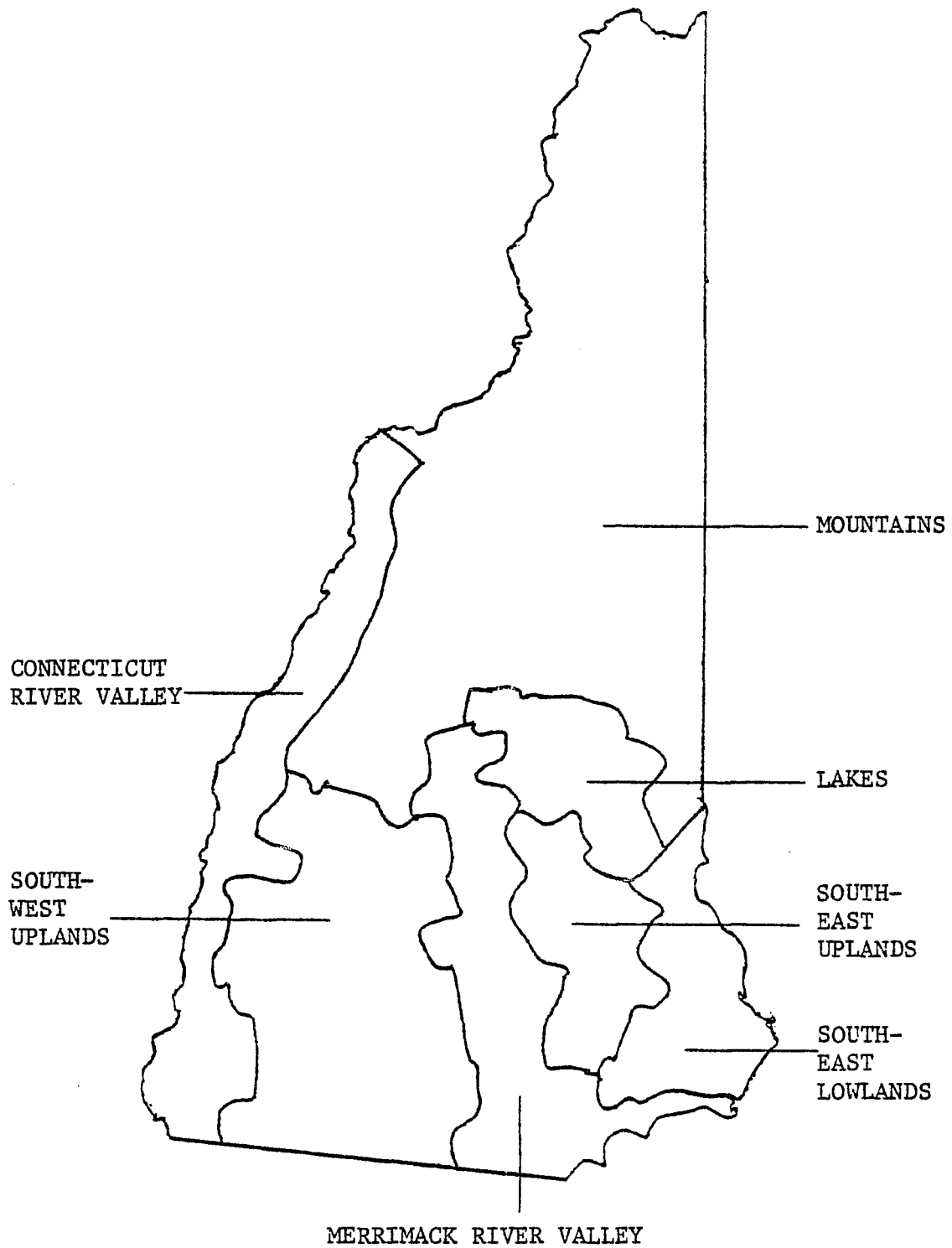
Of course, the simple dichotomous classification of towns does have some problems, for communities with no anti-slavery societies undoubtedly contained individual abolitionists who for some reason chose not to organize. Yet, the absence of unorganized abolitionists does not necessarily weaken the following discussion, for a case can be made that those who did organize anti-slavery societies were generally more committed to the cause. The very fact that they joined a society and publicly attended meetings made them conspicuous, and, as a result, open to condemnation, ridicule, and even physical assault (see Chapter IV). Those who may have been sympathetic to emancipation but did not vocalize their support or join societies could rest assured that they would not be harassed. Whatever the dangers, the division of communities based on the presence or absence

of an anti-slavery society appears as an adequate--if not strong--approach to measuring the social composition of abolitionism at the town level. It is at least a starting point in an analysis of the New Hampshire anti-slavery movement.

The most productive way to study the social foundations of New Hampshire abolitionism is to examine the (1) demographic, (2) economic, (3) political, and (4) religious composition of the two groups of towns. Clearly, one isolated variable does not provide an adequate basis for conclusions, but analyses of all four basic categories should be enough to delineate the principal differences between abolitionist towns and non-abolitionist towns.

Because a degree of diversity existed among the abolitionist towns--based upon their location in the state--it will be necessary at times to examine the communities within a regional framework. New Hampshire's seven geographical boundaries provide the most convenient classification scheme. Starting at the Southeastern shore and moving west and north these regions include: Southeast Lowlands, Southeast Uplands, Lakes, Merrimack River Valley, Southwest Uplands, Connecticut River Valley, and Mountains (see Map).³ Anti-slavery societies existed in towns in all regions except the Lakes, while in the Connecticut Valley only 2 out of 23 towns supported abolitionism in an organized fashion. This is instructive, for as will be shown at the end of the chapter, these two regions contained elements inimical to the growth of abolitionism. Most of the abolitionist towns were clustered in the Southeast Lowlands, upper Merrimack Valley, Southeast Uplands, and the lower mountainous regions.

MAP. GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS OF NEW HAMPSHIRE



Population

In late 1841, Gerrit Smith of New York complained that there was little anti-slavery sentiment in Rochester or, for that matter, in any city or large town in the state because abolitionism "makes its appeal to unsophisticated human nature." Abolitionist agents had spent too much time in cities or in "citified villages" and had little to show for their efforts. Based on past experiences, Smith was convinced that the "more promising field of labor is amongst the honest-hearted men who hold the plow." Echoing Smith, historian Gerald Sorin has written that while most anti-slavery leaders lived in urban areas, "the movement itself was most popular in moderately prosperous Yankee farming communities." Most historians agree that abolitionism found its greatest support in rural or small town areas throughout the North.⁴

It appears, however, that New Hampshire did not fit into this pattern. While anti-slavery sentiment could be found in rural and small town areas, the movement in the Granite State received its greatest support in large towns. Indeed, town size serves as one of the most dramatic distinctions between abolitionist and non-abolitionist towns. The extent of this difference is seen in the fact that the mean population for the abolitionist towns stood at 1933, compared with 1102 for the non-abolitionist ones.⁵ When the towns are divided into five population categories, another major distinction appears. As shown in Table 1, 36.6% of the abolitionist communities had populations over 2,000, compared with only 7.3% of the non-abolitionist towns. When the five population categories are

Table 1. Percentage of Abolitionist and Non-Abolitionist Towns in Population Categories.

	Abolitionist	Non-Abolitionist
2000 and Over	36.6% (15)	7.3% (12)
1500-1999	24.4 (10)	14.6 (24)
1000-1999	24.4 (10)	32.1 (53)
500-999	14.6 (6)	31.5 (52)
Below 500	0	14.6 (24)
Total	100.0% (41)	100.0% (165)
Over 1500	61.0% (25)	21.9% (36)
1000-1499	24.4 (10)	31.1 (53)
Below 999	14.6 (6)	46.1 (76)

combined into three, the differences become more vivid. Over 61% of the abolitionist towns contained populations over 1500, as contrasted to only 21.9% of the non-abolitionist towns. At the other end of the population spectrum, non-abolitionist towns predominated in communities with fewer than 1000 people--46.1% to 14.6%⁶ Stated another way, a majority of towns with populations over 2,000 (55.6%) had anti-slavery societies, compared with only a scant minority of towns with fewer than 2,000 individuals.

The same pattern emerges when the towns are analyzed within their geographic framework. In the six regions where abolitionist towns were located, anti-slavery found its greatest support in populated areas. In all six regions abolitionist towns far exceeded non-abolitionist towns in population. For instance, in the Southeast Lowlands, the mean population of abolitionist towns surpassed non-abolitionist towns by a ratio of close to 3 to 1, while in the Merrimack Valley and the normally small-town mountainous region the ratio came close to 2 to 1 (see Table 2).

Membership figures of the local anti-slavery societies also confirm that abolitionism was mainly a large town phenomenon in New Hampshire.⁷ Based on the total membership (3052) of anti-slavery societies in 31 towns--figures for 10 towns were not provided--64.4% of all organized abolitionists in New Hampshire came from communities with over 2,000 people, and within this population category, 60.6% of all abolitionists resided in the densely populated, non-agricultural towns of Concord, Dover, Somersworth, and Newmarket. Of the four, Dover, Somersworth, and Newmarket were rapidly growing mill towns that were continually cited by civic

Table 2. Mean 1830 Population By Region.

	State	Southeast Lowlands	Southeast Uplands	Merrimack River Valley	Southwest Uplands	Connecticut River Valley	Mountains	Lakes
Abolitionist Towns	1933	2729	1980	1898	1575	1979	1316	---
Non-abolition- ist Towns	1102	1003	1599	1058	1075	1668	724	1549

boosters as evidence that New Hampshire was being touched by the beneficial process of industrialization.⁸ The state capital of Concord, although not a mill town, was nevertheless the political, intellectual, and commercial center of the state.

It can be argued that larger towns would naturally supply the most abolitionists since more people were available to fill the anti-slavery ranks. Yet, the percentage of abolitionists within large towns was greater than in small towns. With the exception of Plymouth, which claimed an inordinately high percentage of abolitionists--17% of the total town population--the three mill towns, the state capital of Concord, and a few other towns with a population over 2000 contained the highest percentage of abolitionists within their respective communities.⁹ Clearly, abolitionism in New Hampshire found its greatest support among the larger communities, with the three non-agricultural mill towns providing close to 1/3 of the total anti-slavery membership.

Population growth, a corollary to town size, provides more evidence concerning the demographic characteristics of abolitionism. The mean percentage population change from 1820 to 1830 for all 41 abolitionist towns was +20%, compared with +10.1% for non-abolitionist towns.¹⁰ This 2 to 1 ratio is largely explained by the rapid growth of the abolitionist towns in the Southeast Lowlands and Merrimack Valley where the mean population increase amounted to 52.6% and 19.8% respectively, compared with only 3.0% and 8.3% respectively for non-abolitionist towns in those two regions. This ratio becomes even more meaningful when the towns are broken down by population group. Throughout New Hampshire, anti-slavery towns of over 2,000

--where a majority of abolitionists resided--experienced a population surge of 33.3% compared with 9.4% for the non-abolitionist towns in the same category.

Of course, not all anti-slavery towns experienced rapid growth; yet, in those towns that supplied the most people to the abolitionist cause, rapid population growth was the norm. As indicated above, this is most clearly revealed in the Southeast Lowlands and Merrimack Valley regions where rapid population growth was typical. Not only were 20 of the 41 abolitionist towns located in these two regions --including the four towns of Concord, Newmarket, Dover, and Somersworth--but 63.3% of all abolitionists lived in these areas. In the Mountain region, however, abolitionist towns increased their population from 1820 to 1830 by only 14.9%, lagging behind that region's non-abolitionist towns, which experienced a mean percentage growth of close to 31%. The same was true with the Southeast Uplands, Southwest Uplands, and the Connecticut River Valley: abolitionist towns in these regions experienced a smaller mean population growth than non-abolitionist communities. Not surprisingly, they supplied the least number of people to the anti-slavery cause.¹¹

True, abolitionism found support among individuals living in large and small towns, agricultural and non-agricultural towns, towns with phenomenal growth rates and towns with less rapid growth. But when the data are analyzed closely, it is apparent that the majority of organized abolitionists in New Hampshire came from rapidly growing towns of over 2,000 people, with a sizeable proportion--1/3--originating in non-agricultural, densely populated mill towns in the Southeast Lowlands.

Wealth

Not only were abolitionist towns as a group more heavily populated than non-abolitionist ones, they were also slightly wealthier. Wealth is a difficult variable to measure, especially at the aggregate level of towns. But the state tax assessment for individual communities provides an indicator of relative wealth. During the 1830's, the state periodically assessed all property in each town and set a figure that towns were to pay. This figure was based upon \$1,000 per 1,000 residents. Hence, an index of town wealth can be created by dividing the assessed tax by the population and multiplying by 1,000. This figure at least furnishes an adequate gauge of town wealth for purposes of comparison among communities.¹²

The purposes of this analysis, towns were ranked from the highest tax rate to the lowest and then divided into five groups by means of a hierarchical clustering technique.¹³ As Table 3 illustrates, a substantial majority of anti-slavery towns was

Table 3. Percentage Of Towns Within Wealth Categories

<u>Wealth Categories</u>	<u>Abolitionist Towns</u>		<u>Non-abolitionist Towns</u>	
Over \$5.00	2.4%	(1)	3.6%	(6)
\$4.00-\$5.00	31.7	(13)	23.6	(39)
\$3.43-\$3.99	36.6	(15)	27.3	(45)
\$3.01-\$3.42	19.5	(8)	27.3	(45)
\$1.66-\$3.00	9.8	(4)	18.2	(30)
TOTAL	100.0	(41)	100.0	(165)

located in the second and third groups, while non-abolitionist towns dominated in the two poorest categories and slightly more in the wealthiest. The distinction becomes sharper when one considers that almost 70% of the abolitionist towns and 54.5% of the non-abolitionist towns were in the three highest groups.

While the wealthiest towns did not, as a rule, contain anti-slavery societies, abolitionist communities on the whole tended to be somewhat wealthier than non-abolitionist towns. This is reflected in the mean tax rate which stood at \$3.81 for the 41 abolitionist towns compared with \$3.57 for non-abolitionist towns.¹⁴ Although this is not a substantial difference, it is nevertheless statistically significant and, moreover, it is enough to suggest that abolitionist towns were slightly wealthier as a group. This conclusion is sustained by the regional data. Abolitionist towns in every region except the Connecticut Valley were rated higher than non-abolitionist towns. The Southeast Lowlands--where the largest percentage of abolitionists resided--exhibited the greatest disparity between the two groups of towns; but even in the poorest area of the state (Mountain region), abolitionist towns were rated higher as a group than non-abolitionist communities.

Major distinctions are illuminated further when the five population categories are used as a control. The greatest disparity existed between abolitionist and non-abolitionist towns in the most populated communities. The abolitionist towns with populations over 2,000 averaged a tax rate of \$4.02, compared with \$3.62 for non-abolitionist towns. In the second and third population categories the two groups were closer together; but in the least populated areas,

abolitionist towns were assessed at a much higher rate. This is significant because with a mean tax rate of \$4.02, the smallest abolitionist towns tied with the largest ones. Those abolitionist towns with 500 to 999 residents, while containing only 2.6% of the total anti-slavery membership, were nevertheless far wealthier than the non-abolitionist towns in all five population categories. Hence, while New Hampshire abolitionism was primarily a large town phenomenon, those abolitionists living in small towns were distinguished by the relative affluence of their respective communities.

If abolitionist towns as a group tended to be wealthier than non-abolitionist towns, how did individual abolitionists fare within the wealth structure of their particular town? Because of the scarcity of data, any precision in determining economic status remains tentative. Nevertheless, there is enough information in the tax records to provide clues to the abolitionists' economic background.

Tax lists for five towns were examined to obtain information on the amount of taxes individuals paid, the value of land they held, and the amount of stocks they owned. Of the five towns, four were agricultural: New Ipswich, a wealthy community bordering on Massachusetts; Durham, a community in the Southeast Lowlands; Campton, a community located in the rugged mountain region; and Loudon, a town located in the Southeast Uplands. One community--Newmarket--was a rapidly growing mill town in the Southeast Lowlands.¹⁵

In an effort to examine the abolitionists within the economic structure of their community, all taxpayers in each of the five towns were ranked according to the total tax they paid. Then each taxpayer was placed into five approximate quintiles, from the wealthiest 20%

to the poorest 20%. In every town, abolitionists were concentrated in the top 60% of the wealth categories; indeed, most could be found in the top 40%. Furthermore, in every town except Loudon, the largest percentage of abolitionists was located in the top 20%. Even more significant was the fact that three-quarters of the identifiable abolitionists in Newmarket were in the top 20%. (See the Appendix for a complete breakdown of each town and for a comparison of identifiable abolitionists, Democrats, and non-abolitionist Whigs.) Hence, while abolitionists could be found in all wealth categories, the majority was concentrated in the upper two quintiles.

The tax lists for only three towns supplied the value of land for each resident. Abolitionists in Loudon and New Ipswich had a higher mean value of land than that of the town itself; but in Loudon, abolitionists ranked third behind identifiable Democrats and non-abolitionist Whigs, while the abolitionists in New Ipswich ranked behind the Whigs. In Newmarket, however, abolitionists not only enjoyed a much higher mean value of land than that of the town, but they also surpassed the identifiable non-abolitionist Whigs and Democrats as well (see the Appendix).

The tax lists for New Ipswich and Newmarket also supplied the amount and value of stocks individuals owned. Although the numbers involved are extremely small, they are nevertheless suggestive. In New Ipswich, two of the nine identifiable abolitionists (22.2%) owned stocks in businesses dedicated to manufacturing pursuits. These amounted to 10.8% of the total value of stocks held in the town. While non-abolitionist Whigs owned more--two Whigs held 18.8% of

the total value of stocks--abolitionists far outdistanced the percentage of all non-abolitionists who held stocks (34, or 8.8% of the total population).

The mill town of Newmarket supplies the most interesting information. Of the eight abolitionists who could be identified, two (25%) owned the majority of stocks in the flourishing cotton mills. Abolitionists Charles Lane and Benjamin Lovering, after investing heavily in the mills throughout the 1820's and 1830's, owned 60% of the total value of stocks held in Newmarket.

Whether any of these indicators of wealth or economic activity is truly representative remains unclear, for the identities of most local abolitionists, Whigs, and Democrats are not known. Yet, those who could be identified have provided at least a suggestion of the abolitionists' economic standing. In some towns abolitionist were more economically secure than non-abolitionist Whigs or Democrats; in other towns they were not. But in all towns, abolitionists as a group tended to be concentrated in the upper 40% of the wealth categories, the mean value of their land was higher than that of the non-abolitionists, and, if New Ipswich and Newmarket were representative, a sizeable minority of abolitionists engaged in financial endeavors that were directly related to industrial concerns.

Politics

Politically, New Hampshire was a strong Democratic state. In 1828 the state supported John Quincy Adams and the National Republicans; but after that, New Hampshire was firmly in the

Democratic fold.¹⁶ The state's size notwithstanding, the Democratic organization in New Hampshire was one of the strongest in the nation, even after the party split in the late 1830's between conservative and radicals (or Loco-Focos). Not surprisingly, therefore, the Whig party was one of the weakest in the nation. New Hampshire Whigs seldom launched a truly noteworthy or competitive campaign, and in some instances, notably in 1833 and 1835, Whig loyalists stayed at home, admitted defeat months before the election, or publicly voiced dissatisfaction with their own slate of candidates.¹⁷ Only the majority of towns in the Connecticut Valley and a handful of others could be expected to vote National Republican or Whig throughout the late 1820's and 1830's.

Abolitionist towns reflected this political complexion. The majority of both abolitionist and non-abolitionist communities was Democratic; but as a group, abolitionist towns tended to be more politically competitive than non-abolitionist towns, as shown in Table 4 which illustrates the average mean vote for eight elections held between 1828 and 1835, and the percentage difference between the two parties.¹⁸ While political differences between abolitionist and non-abolitionist towns were statistically insignificant, Table 4 nevertheless suggests that the margin between the two parties was less in abolitionist towns than in non-abolitionist ones. Using the average mean for the Democratic vote in abolitionist towns, only 7.6% separated the strongest Democratic region (Southwest Uplands) from the weakest (Southeast Lowlands). But in the non-abolitionist towns, almost 20% separated the highest Democratic vote from the lowest. Furthermore, except for the Southwest Uplands, the margin

Table 4. Mean Percentage Vote (1828-1835) And Party Differentials, By Region.

Abolitionist Towns	State	Southeast Lowlands	Southeast Uplands	Merrimack River Valley	Southwest Uplands	Mountains	Lakes
Democrat	52.5	51.3	51.7	53.6	58.8	51.9	---
Whig	47.4	48.6	47.7	46.3	41.1	47.9	---
Differential	5.1	2.7	4.0	7.3	17.7	4.0	---
Non-abolitionist Towns							
Democrat	59.2	52.9	67.1	59.2	55.1	72.6	66.8
Whig	40.7	47.0	32.8	40.7	44.9	27.3	33.1
Differential	18.5	5.9	34.3	18.5	10.2	45.3	33.7

between the two parties was close in abolitionist towns in all regions, while in non-abolitionist towns only the Southeast Lowlands experienced a degree of political competitiveness.

Membership figures for local anti-slavery societies underscore the point. An analysis of the abolitionists' party identification suggests that a vast majority were Whigs. Indeed, of 26 abolitionists whose party allegiance could be determined, 25 were--or had been--Whigs.¹⁹ It is safe to assume that the sample, although small, mirrors the larger abolitionist community. This finding is at least in line with anti-slavery scholarship, for whatever conclusions they may have reached concerning the movement in general, most historians agree that abolitionists tended to hail from Whiggish backgrounds, especially in the 1830's.²⁰

But if the majority of abolitionists were Whigs, did they emerge from strong Whig towns--that is, for the purposes of this study, towns with an average mean Whig vote of over 60%? Clearly, three-quarters of the abolitionists resided in towns where the Whigs were at best marginally competitive or towns that registered exceptionally low Whig returns. In fact, the largest percentage of abolitionists (45.6%) lived in towns that registered an average mean National Republican-Whig vote between 50% and 58%. It is also instructive to note that abolitionists from the non-agricultural towns of Concord, Dover, and Newmarket were included in this group. Only Somersworth could be classified as a strong Whig town, but with its mean National Republican-Whig vote of 60.3%, it just barely qualifies. Most abolitionists, while boasting Whig credentials, were not from strong Whig areas within the state. This is clear

when one considers the Connecticut Valley, a strong Whiggish region. Individuals in only 2 of 23 towns bothered to form an anti-slavery society, and only one--Lyme--was a strong Whig town.

What explains this dual phenomenon of the strong presence of abolitionists in politically competitive towns and weak Whig towns, but not, as might be expected, in Whig strongholds? One possible explanation rests in the changing political complexion of the state: between 1828 and 1835, almost 39% of all organized abolitionists witnessed their National Republican towns being transformed into Democratic strongholds. Another 27.1% came from strong Democratic towns in 1828 and witnessed the National Republican and Whig vote plummet to virtually nothing. In other words, 66% of all abolitionists lived in towns which either transferred political allegiance to the Democrats or saw the Whig party decline to such an extent that it was almost non-existent. True, the two important abolitionist towns of Dover and Somersworth consistently gave majorities to the National Republicans and Whigs, even though the margins of victory were narrow, especially in Dover. But the state capital of Concord and the thriving mill town of Newmarket had been strong National Republican towns in the late 1820's that went Democratic by 1835. The fact that most abolitionists resided only in weak Whig or competitive towns suggests that in strong Whig areas, an anti-slavery society would have been superfluous. Individuals with anti-slavery sensibilities could take comfort in the knowledge that their non-abolitionist Whig state legislators were at least voting alone lines sympathetic with anti-slavery doctrines. While they eschewed abolitionism, many New Hampshire Whig legislators voted on numerous

occasions to uphold the abolitionists' right to petition Congress, the right to send literature to the South, and the right to speak publicly without the fear of physical assault. Some Whig state legislators even advocated the banishment of the slave trade in the District of Columbia.²¹

Yet, the fact remains that where the Whig party was strong, organized abolitionism did not thrive. Anti-slavery societies arose in politically competitive towns and in towns that experienced a sharp decline in Whig votes.

Religion

The anti-slavery movement in New Hampshire claimed followers among Congregationalists, Methodists, Baptists, Freewill Baptists and, in fewer numbers, Quakers.²² The Methodists had created a state anti-slavery organization in 1835 and the state-wide Baptist and Freewill Baptist newspapers were decidedly anti-slavery. Indeed, the Freewill Baptist press and ministry were so thoroughly anti-slavery in temperament that they were often attacked as nothing more than agents of abolitionism masquerading as a religious denomination.²³

Congregationalism--the largest denomination in the state--boasted a number of highly visible and highly active anti-slavery laymen and ministers. John Farmer, a leading founder and recording secretary of the NHASS, was a Congregationalist, as were J. Horace Kimball and Nathaniel P. Rogers, editor of the Herald of Freedom in the 1830's. Several Congregational ministers, including Nathaniel Bouton of Concord, David Root of Dover, and Jonathan

Curtis of Pittsfield, were especially active in promoting the anti-slavery cause. While such Congregational luminaries supported freedom for the slave, the denomination's state-wide paper chose to support the discredited colonization movement. In fact, most major spokesmen for New Hampshire Congregationalism remained aloof from anti-slavery activity and did not form a state abolitionist organization until 1841.²⁴

While a number of laymen and ministers representing all denominations supported abolitionism, not all of their fellow communicants followed suit. The Reverend Edmund Worth, editor of the New Hampshire Baptist Register, complained as late as 1840 that although a sizeable number of Baptist ministers held pronounced anti-slavery views, their communicants did not.²⁵ The Freewill Baptists offer further verification of this phenomenon. The Dover-based abolitionist Morning Star served as the organ of Freewill Baptists throughout the northeast; yet, where there was a preponderance of followers in New Hampshire towns, there were no anti-slavery societies. In fact, Freewill Baptist towns gave their vote consistently to Jackson and his stridently anti-abolitionist party.²⁶

In most instances, organized anti-slavery activity seemed to bear little relationship to the religious composition of a town. This is apparent when membership figures for the various denominations are examined in abolitionist and non-abolitionist towns.²⁷ Clearly, when the mean denominational percentage of membership is used to provide insight into the religious structure of abolitionist and non-abolitionist towns, the Congregational, Baptists, and Freewill

Baptists were almost evenly matched in both groups. For instance, the mean percentage of Congregationalists in abolitionist towns was 43% and in non-abolitionist towns it was 45%; the mean percentage of Baptists in abolitionist towns was 14.8% compared with 14.2% in non-abolitionist towns. Moreover, non-abolitionist towns had a higher mean percentage of Freewill Baptists than abolitionist towns (17.1% to 12.5%). As mentioned earlier, this is surprising given the fact that the Freewill Baptist leadership and press were thoroughly abolitionized. Perhaps Freewillers were so anti-slavery in temperament that a secular society seemed superfluous, especially when abolitionist sentiment could be channeled within the actual structure of the church. If so, how does one explain the fact that towns with large Freewill Baptist majorities enthusiastically supported the New Hampshire Democratic party, the most anti-abolitionist political force in the state? The historian Donald Cole has discovered that poorer New Hampshire towns tended to vote for Jackson in 1832,²⁸ and since most of the Freewill Baptist strongholds were poor, perhaps economics won over anti-slavery sentiment on election day. Whatever the case, anti-slavery societies did not blossom in Freewill Baptist areas.

If the Congregational, Baptist, and Freewill Baptist populations were similar in both abolitionist and non-abolitionist towns, the Methodist populations deviated markedly. Indeed, 44% of all towns with Methodist majorities contained an anti-slavery society, compared to only 22% of all towns with Congregational majorities.²⁹ Similarly, the abolitionist towns had a much higher mean percentage of Methodists (27%) compared with the non-abolitionist towns (10.5%).³⁰

When regional figures are employed, the same pattern emerges: the mean percentage of Methodists in abolitionist towns outstripped those in non-abolitionist towns (see Table 5).

Likewise, anti-slavery membership figures underscore the point that abolitionism did well in Methodist areas. Close to 56% of all abolitionists resided in towns where Methodism either claimed a majority (over 50%) or a plurality (under 50% but the dominant sect in the town) of the church-going population; 37% of the abolitionists lived in towns dominated by the Congregationalists.

Of course, these figures do not necessarily indicate that Methodists outnumbered Congregationalists within the anti-slavery ranks. The above data only suggest that abolitionism did well where there was a high concentration of Methodists. Unfortunately, church records for key towns--the one major source that could shed light on an individual's religious affiliation--are unavailable. However, there is enough qualitative evidence to suggest that, while Methodists may or may not have outnumbered Congregationalists within the anti-slavery ranks, they were a major force within the movement.

That abolitionism was rapidly winning numerous converts among Methodists was evident to any contemporary who chose to analyze the strength of the cause in New Hampshire. One abolitionist living outside the state reported that in the Granite State "a very large number of the followers of the blessed Wesley . . . are the faithful and untiring friends of the oppressed."³¹

This observation did not go unnoticed by worried Democrats who were quite aware of the possible political consequences. Certainly not all Methodists were Democrats, but the Granite State Democracy

Table 5. Mean Percentage Methodists in Abolitionist and Non-Abolitionist Towns.

	State	Southeast Lowlands	Southeast Uplands	Merrimack River Valley	Southwest Uplands	Connecticut River Valley	Mountains	Lakes
Abolitionist Towns	26.9%	42.1%	24.4%	18.3%	24.5%	25.5%	25.2%	---
Non-abolition- ist Towns	10.5%	15.4%	0	10.4%	6.8%	6.3%	14.1%	20.4%

assumed that the lion's share of the Methodist vote would be given to the party of Jackson, regardless of the election year. Apparently this assumption was partially grounded in fact, for as Donald Cole has discovered, the Democratic party did well in Methodist areas in the 1830's.³² Hence, fearful that anti-slavery sentiment might sweep through Methodist towns and subsequently undermine the strength of the Democracy, party leaders launched a crusade to stem the Methodist flight into abolitionism.

The Patriot--the state's leading Jacksonian organ--acknowledged that an unusually large number of Methodists had "been the peculiar friend of the sable race," but warned them that any denunciations of slavery would only aggravate the slave's plight in the South and weaken Methodist inter-sectional unity.³³ To lend credibility to its claim, the Patriot continuously reprinted anti-abolitionist articles or sermons by nationally-known Methodist clergymen and bishops. In an introduction to a reprinted article, the Patriot praised two Methodist bishops--one in New England and one in New York--who had urged abolitionists to use caution when discussing slavery because the subject would "inflame the public mind with angry passions."³⁴ The Patriot also reprinted a plea from the 1835 Baltimore Annual Conference of Methodists urging northerners to halt the flow of anti-slavery tracts to the South because such literature was "'doing immense mischief in all our southern country."³⁵

The Patriot took special delight in printing articles that denounced specific New Hampshire abolitionists. In one instance, a story was reprinted which reported that a group of New England Methodists had denounced anti-slavery agitation, with the reminder

that the Reverend George Storrs, a Methodist anti-slavery agent living in New Hampshire, was "one who has shown his willingness to abandon his vocation of a preacher of the mild doctrines of the Saviour to become the sower of discord and contention in the churches, and rebellion and treason in the land."³⁶ Indeed, Storrs was the most visible Methodist anti-slavery agent in the state, and it was therefore important for the Democrats to take measures that would disarm his argument in order to undercut anti-slavery sentiment within Methodist circles. Apparently, Democrats felt that the best way to do this was to cast aspersions on Storrs' loyalties as a man of God. Hence, the Patriot warned Methodist readers that Storrs was not a practicing Methodist at all; rather, he was a "hired agent of the incendiary abolitionists."³⁷

It appears that the Democrats overreacted to the threat of losing Methodist supporters to abolitionism, for many Methodist towns continued to support Jacksonian candidates, albeit in smaller numbers.³⁸ But whatever the case, the Democrats' worried response coupled with the statistical evidence suggest that Methodism was clearly a potent ingredient in New Hampshire abolitionism.

While it is undeniable that abolitionists in New Hampshire could be found in a wide variety of communities, the town-level data has provided a more refined portrait. Specifically, 2/3 of the New Hampshire abolitionists were from large towns of over 2,000 and among this population, almost 2/3 were from the state capital of Concord and the three rapidly growing mill towns of Dover, Somersworth, and Newmarket. Furthermore, large towns claimed a higher percentage

of abolitionists among their total population than did small towns. While not all anti-slavery towns experienced a large population increase from 1820 to 1830, 63.3% of all abolitionists came from the Southeast Lowlands and the Merrimack Valley, two of the fastest growing areas in the state. Moreover, the majority of abolitionists resided in moderately wealthy towns and, if the tax records are indicative, most abolitionists enjoyed a degree of economic success that exceeded the majority of their fellow townsmen. Politically, abolitionists were overwhelmingly Whig, yet 3/4 of all abolitionists originated in towns with a very weak Whig party at worst, and a marginally competitive one at best. And, while abolitionists could be found among all religious denominations, towns with anti-slavery societies had a higher percentage of Methodist communicants.

These findings are summarized in Table 6, where the relevant mean statistics of the Southeast Lowlands, Connecticut River Valley, and Lakes regions are presented. Only 2 of 23 towns in the Connecticut Valley had an anti-slavery society, while none existed in the Lakes region. The Southeast Lowlands, the bastion of abolitionism, contained almost 1/3 of the state's organized abolitionists. The differences among the three groups of towns are striking. The abolitionist towns in the Southeast Lowlands outdistanced the towns in the other two regions in population, population growth, and tax valuation. As a group, abolitionist towns in the Southeast Lowlands were politically competitive, with only 2.7% separating the two parties; the Connecticut River Valley, however, was a strong Whig area and the Lakes region was a bastion for the New Hampshire Democracy. In terms of religious composition,

Table 6. Mean Population, Economic, Political, and Religious Data For Selected Towns in Three Regions.

	Southeast Lowlands (abolitionist towns) n=9	Lakes (all towns) n=9	Connecticut River Valley (non-abolitionist towns) n=21
Population, 1830	2729	1549	1668
Percentage Popu- lation Change, 1820-1830	52.6	5.7	6.4
Tax Evaluation, 1833	\$4.50	\$3.17	\$4.01
Average Mean Percentage Democratic Vote, 1828-1835	51.3	66.8	42.7
Average Mean Percentage National Republican- Whig Vote, 1828-1835	48.6	33.1	57.2
Percentage Congregational	35.5	25.8	72.2
Percentage Methodist	42.1	20.4	6.3
Percentage Baptist	8.3	5.1	16.5
Percentage Freewill Baptist	9.5	47.2	1.2
Percentage Other Denomination	4.2	1.6	2.6

the Southeast Lowland abolitionist towns had a higher mean percentage of Methodist communicants than either of the two other regions. The Connecticut Valley was overwhelmingly Congregational, and the Lakes region, while non-Congregational in nature, provided the largest percentages of Freewill Baptists state-wide--a denomination that had few adherents within abolitionist towns throughout New Hampshire. In addition--and not shown in the table--the Southeast Lowlands claimed the three important mill towns in the state, while the Lakes and Connecticut Valley regions were predominantly rural.

The conclusions based upon an analysis of the social foundations of anti-slavery bolster the abolitionists' perception of themselves and their society. Given the abolitionists' concern with economic and social progress--progress that they saw as being hampered by the politically powerful aristocratic South and its archaic institution of slavery--it is not surprising to find the anti-slavery movement winning adherents in rapidly growing, largely populated, and relatively wealthy towns, especially in the three largest mill towns which supplied over 1/3 of the total abolitionist membership. Nor is it surprising to find that the movement attracted a high percentage of Whiggish supporters from areas of weak and declining Whig strength. In heavily Whig areas, there was no urgency to form anti-slavery societies since Whig state legislators at least took positions sympathetic to the abolitionist cause. But in areas where the Democratic party was gaining strength at the expense of the National Republicans and Whigs, an anti-slavery society was essential to provide not only a vehicle that would promote freedom for the slave, but to establish an outlet to counter the Democrats'

pro-slavery defense of the backward, agrarian South.

Furthermore, given the abolitionists' preoccupation with the sin of slavery, it is not astonishing that the movement could attract members from all religious denominations in the state. Yet, it is difficult to ascertain why the movement did remarkably well in Methodist areas, especially in light of the fact that southern Methodists and the northern Methodist hierarchy were quick to defend the rights of slaveholders. Perhaps many New Hampshire Methodists felt compelled to embrace abolitionism since their church was strong in the South and since a high percentage of slaveholders were Methodists.³⁹ While Congregationalists and Freewill Baptists were based almost exclusively in New England and New York, Methodists had a broader national base. It is conceivable, therefore, that New Hampshire Methodists came to believe that because of the attitudes and behavior of their southern brethren, the entire Methodist population--both North and South--was tainted with the sin of slavery. True, the Baptists were also strong in the South and, like the Methodists, they claimed a high percentage of slaveholders. But the Baptists lacked a highly visible agent to rally Granite State Baptists to the cause. The Methodists, however, had an articulate, crusading minister in George Storrs--one who not only persuaded individual Methodists to fight the sin of slavery, but one who helped convert the state-wide Methodist Conference to anti-slavery principles.⁴⁰

Whatever impelled the abolitionists--whether they were stirred to oppose slavery out of religious or secular motives--or both--they were convinced that the power of slavery was awesome and

unpardonable. The South's archaic and sinful institution not only physically enslaved human beings, but within the national political arena its defenders also thwarted what the abolitionists advanced as the more progressive economic pursuits of a growing industrial and commercial North. Hence, both the slave and the more enlightened elements in the North were held prisoner by a master neither chose to rule their lives. The abolition of slavery, therefore, would accomplish two ends. On the one hand, it would free individuals who were forced into bondage against their will, and on the other hand, it would free an economically advancing North from the stranglehold of Southern aristocratic oppression. Once slavery was destroyed, individuals everywhere could enjoy the fruits of a growing, dynamic, industrializing free nation.

CHAPTER III

NOTES

¹ See, for instance, Patriot, April 25, 1836 and December 24, 1838.

² Gilbert Barnes, The Anti-Slavery Impulse, 1830-1844 (New York, 1933), pp. 90-91; David Donald, "Toward a Reconsideration of Abolitionists," in Lincoln Reconsidered (New York, 1956), passim; James Brewer Stewart, Holy Warriors (New York, 1976), pp. 37-38. Gerald Sorin, The New York Abolitionists: A Case Study of Political Radicalism (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Corporation, 1971), p. 105; Ronald Walters, The Antislavery Appeal (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), p. 16.

³ The regional breakdown of New Hampshire has been extracted with minor changes from Donald Cole, Jacksonian Democracy in New Hampshire, 1800-1851 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), p. 143. Cole based his geographical regions on a study by Margery Howarth, New Hampshire: A Study of Its Cities and Towns in Relation to Their Physical Background (Concord: The New Hampshire Foundation, 1936).

⁴ Emancipator, December 10, 1841; Sorin, Abolitionism, p. 52. Whitney Cross, in his The Burned-Over District (New York: Harper and Row, 1950), p. 222, states that in New York "no city proved . . . as strong in abolition sentiment as rural areas." Louis Fuller notes in The Crusade Against Slavery (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1960), p. 29, that "the abolitionist movement was basically rural, but this was because the nation was overwhelmingly rural."

⁵ The standard deviation (sd) for abolitionist towns was 1394; for non-abolitionist towns, 581. Population figures were taken from the New Hampshire Register, 1835 (Concord, 1835), pp. 16-18 (hereafter, NHR).

Occasionally throughout this chapter two tests of statistical significance--the t-test and Chi-square (X^2)--will be employed. In both cases, results will be given at the 0.01 level.

⁶ Significant at the 0.01 level.

⁷ Membership figures were taken from the minutes of the First Annual Meeting of the New Hampshire Anti-Slavery Society, June 4, 1835.

⁸ New Hampshire Statesman, April 23, 1831; N.P. Rogers to Richard Webb, January 23, 1842, BPL-ASC.

⁹ With the exception of Plymouth and Dunbarton, the top 8 towns that contained the highest percentage of abolitionists had populations over 2000.

	<u>Population, 1830</u>	<u>Percentage abolitionists in towns</u>
Plymouth	1175	17.2%
Dover	5549	10.3
Dunbarton	1067	8.4
Newmarket	2013	7.4
Concord	3727	7.2
Goffstown	2213	7.2
Somersworth	3090	6.7
Boscawen	2093	5.5

Population figures were extracted from NHR, 1835; membership figures can be found in the minutes of the First Annual Meeting.

¹⁰ Significant at the 0.01 level.

¹¹ Population figures were extracted from NHR, 1835. The three mill towns experienced phenomenal growth between 1820 and 1830.

	<u>Dover</u>	<u>Somersworth</u>	<u>Newmarket</u>
Population, 1820	2871	841	1033
Population, 1830	5549	3090	2013
Percentage Change	+93.2%	+267.4%	+94.9%

¹² In his study of Jacksonian Democracy, Donald Cole uses the same economic classification to probe the dimensions of the New Hampshire Democratic party. See Cole, pp. 146-48.

By dividing the assessed tax by the population a more accurate gauge of a town's relative wealth will emerge. For instance, the town of Concord was assessed \$16.00 for every \$1,000 to be raised (and for every 1,000 in town population). The town of Henniker was assessed \$7.80. It appears that, based on the assessed figure, Concord was wealthier than Henniker. But when the assessed tax is divided by the population (and multiplied by 1000), Concord's adjusted tax rate is \$4.29 and Henniker's is \$4.52.

¹³ Because the adjusted tax rates were fairly evenly distributed, it was difficult to randomly select meaningful categories. The clustering technique divided the towns into 5 Unequal groups. For a discussion of hierarchical clustering, see Charles Wetherell, "A Note on Hierarchical Clustering," Historical Methods Newsletter, X(Summer, 1977), pp. 109-16.

¹⁴ Significant at the 0.01 level. Tax rates were taken from Laws of New Hampshire (Concord, 1922), Vol. 10, pp. 412-19.

¹⁵ Tax lists for the five towns may be found in the New Hampshire Historical Society. The dates for the tax lists are: Durham, 1835; New Ipswich, 1835; Campton, 1836; Loudon, 1835; and Newmarket, 1834. Names of abolitionists, Whigs, and Democrats were taken from a variety of sources, but most of them can be found in

Herald of Freedom, April 29, 1836 and September 3, 1836; Patriot, February 2 and 9, 1835, February 1, 1836; New Hampshire Statesman, June 23, 1832, January 4, 1835.

16 State-wide election returns may be found in the Manual for the General Court (Concord, 1891).

17 New Hampshire Statesman, February 23, 1833. Upon being notified of the Whig slate for 1833, the editor of the Whiggish Statesman complained that "our own selection would have presented an almost entire change."

18 All official returns may be found at the New Hampshire State Archives. But see also Patriot, March 14, 1831 and November 20, 1832. The eight elections were: the Presidential elections of 1828 and 1832 and the Gubernatorial elections for 1828, 1829, 1830, 1831, 1832 and 1835.

19 For the most part, the 26 abolitionists lived in Milford, Plymouth, and New Ipswich. George Ramsdell, History of Milford (Concord: The Rumsford Press, 1901), passim; Charles Chandler, The History of New Ipswich, 1735-1914 (Fitchburg, Massachusetts: Sentinel Press, 1914), passim; Ezra Stearns, History of Plymouth (Cambridge: University Press, 1906), passim.

20 Sorin, The New York Abolitionists, p. 105. Sorin found that for the 16 identifiable abolitionist leaders, 15 were Whigs. See also Walters, The Antislavery Appeal, p. 16.

21 New Hampshire Whigs, like most Whigs in the North, backed abolitionists on a number of issues even though they themselves remained aloof from the movement. For a breakdown of Whig voting patterns in the New Hampshire legislature, see Herbert Ershkowitz and William Shade, "Consensus of Conflict? Political Behavior in the State Legislatures during the Jackson Era," Journal of American History LVIII(December, 1971), pp. 591-621.

22 By the 1830's, Quakers dominated in only one town--Weare. A few Quakers could be found in Dover and in the Southeast generally. See Helen Dearborn, Town History of Weare, New Hampshire From 1888 (Concord: Evans Printing Company, 1959).

23 See for example Patriot, July 4, 1836 and Liberator, June 22, 1838.

24 Herald of Freedom, June 10, 1841.

25 New Hampshire Baptist Register, January 4, 1840.

26 Based on official election returns, 1828-1835 located in the state archives.

27 Membership figures for the major sects were taken from Minutes of the General [Congregational] Association of New Hampshire, 1835 (Concord, 1835); Proceedings of the Baptist Convention of the State of New Hampshire (Concord, 1835); Freewill Baptist Register, 1835 (Dover, 1835); New Hampshire Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the Year 1839 (Boston, 1839).

28 Cole, pp. 146-50.

29 Significant at the 0.01 level.

30 Significant at the 0.01 level.

31 Liberator, June 9, 1837.

32 Cole, p. 153.

33 Patriot, October 12, 1835.

34 Ibid., September 14, 1835. See also September 7, 1835, May 2, July 4, and July 11, 1836.

35 Ibid., September 21, 1835.

36 Ibid., September 14, 1835; see also March 28, 1836.

37 Ibid., October 5, 1835; see also May 7, 1838.

38 See Official Returns, State Archives, Concord, New Hampshire.

39 Donald Mathews, Slavery and Methodism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), passim.

40 Ibid., p. 133.

CHAPTER IV

"FEDERALISTS, FANATICS, AND FOREIGNERS"

In New Hampshire, as in most northern states, the slavery issue was a sensitive one and those who feared or hated the abolitionists made their displeasure known in a variety of ways. Abolitionists were excoriated in the press, denounced at various political gatherings, and often were chased through the streets by angry mobs. These responses to the abolitionists derived from a number of considerations. Many unsympathetic northerners felt uneasy--if not indignant--at the abolitionists' insistence that blacks should enjoy the same rights as whites. They also believed that anti-slavery activity threatened the Republic because sensitive southerners, perceiving that elements of the northern population were endangering their "property," might withdraw from the Union. In addition, many of the anti-abolitionists resented the abolitionists' social and political origins, which anti-abolitionists¹ claimed were founded upon an aristocratic-Federalist nexus.

While all of these responses were manifested in New Hampshire, not everyone harshly denounced the abolitionists. Nevertheless, many people were concerned with the growing divisiveness and bitterness created by the abolitionists' attack upon slavery. Many clergymen, for instance, could not be part of a movement in which "vindictiveness" played such a large role. Churches especially were divided over the question of emancipation and the means to effect it.

Even though clergymen were highly visible in the abolitionist movement, many New Hampshire religious leaders realized that to engage in such a volatile debate meant sacrificing the autonomy and harmony of their respective churches. The Reverend J. Atwood, a Francestown Baptist minister, urged his brethren to stand aloof from the abolitionist excitement. While he regretted the evils of slavery it was nevertheless his duty and the duty of his fellow ministers "to withdraw entirely from this unhallowed controversy" because a minister's primary responsibility was to preach the gospel to his flock. Any deviation from this course "is but leaving the word of God to serve tables." Moreover, Baptist unity would be sacrificed, since many southern Baptists would take offense to anti-slavery resolutions passed by northern churches.²

Likewise, a group of "neutral" Congregational ministers urged the New Hampshire Observer, the state's Congregational organ, to cease publishing accounts of abolitionist activities. The ministers noted that Congregationalists in New Hampshire were divided on the subject, and such discussion within the official press merely inflamed tempers. To ignore the matter would be the best possible course and would prevent further divisions among Congregationalists.³

The fear of irreparable dislocations within the Christian community was a major issue at Andover Theological Seminary, the principal institution that supplied many future New Hampshire Congregational ministers. Upon hearing the speeches of several national anti-slavery agents, the Andover students created an abolitionist society in 1835. The faculty, however, announced that it would remain aloof from the organization because it did not

wish to see the Seminary turned into a bastion of abolitionism. In the interests of "peace and union"--and with the experience of Lane Seminary no doubt fresh in their minds--the faculty voted not to discuss the subject because anti-slavery activities would conflict with their major duty of training others "for the sacred office." The faculty then "strongly suggested" to the students that they disband their organization because, as one professor remarked, slavery was a subject in which the students "had no personal concern." After some argument the students disbanded their society.⁴

If by the mid-1830's the anti-slavery debate was capable of dividing religious bodies, it was unable to divide the New Hampshire Democrats, because the party of Jackson had taken the offensive against the "pernicious doctrines" of the abolitionists. Clearly the most vitriolic source of anti-abolitionism within the state, Jacksonian Democrats directed their ire toward the political origins of the abolitionists, the threat of black equality, and the fear that abolitionists would disrupt the Union and trample upon the Constitution.

It was easy for the Jacksonians to vilify the abolitionists as "broken down federalist-Whig politicians" because, in fact, many of the state's abolitionists had emerged from Whig backgrounds (see Chapter III). Since the Whigs were so weak in New Hampshire, the Democrats assumed that abolitionist societies were being used as convenient stepping stones to power, if only the former Whigs could make slavery an important issue.⁵ Cautious Democrats believed that the only way to prevent such an occurrence would be to discredit both the anti-slavery crusade and the "federalist-Whig" politicians

who were friendly to the cause.

Readers of the Democratic New Hampshire Patriot were constantly reminded about the "treacheries" of the Federalist Hartford Convention, the "blue lights" of New England, and the aristocratic financial programs of Alexander Hamilton. According to the Patriot, the only difference among a Federalist, Whig, and abolitionist was the name; no matter how frequently the party chose to change its label, the people remained the same. Those agitating the slave question "are those who have [always] been the determined foes of the republican party." In Concord, the Patriot noted that all the abolitionists were Whigs and "federalists of the straightest sect." The leaders of the states' anti-slavery organization "are either bankrupt [Federalist] politicians or their agents."⁶

While the anti-abolitionist Democrats did possess a natural antipathy toward the abolitionists' Whiggish background, they were more concerned over the fact that abolitionists were apparently making remarkable gains in heavily Methodist areas. As indicated in Chapter III, Methodists had traditionally given Democrats of New Hampshire large pluralities, but this situation was being undermined by the efforts of abolitionists. To combat the possible erosion of Methodist support, the Democrats reprinted articles and editorials from Methodist clergymen throughout the country denouncing abolitionism; but when this tactic apparently failed to prevent the Methodist exodus to the anti-slavery cause, New Hampshire Democrats escalated their attacks upon the "aristocratical federalists," hoping to capitalize upon economic differences between rural Methodists and the more cosmopolitan abolitionist leadership.

Likewise, the Democrats began referring to abolition as a "Congregational-Federalist" plot, probably hoping that Methodists would remember the days before the Toleration Act of 1819 when non-Congregationalists were required to support a Congregational clergy in their towns. Whatever the result, the Democrats were adept at associating "federalism" with abolitionism, even though most New Hampshire abolitionists had renounced their former Whig affiliation.⁷

If the Democrats were unable to halt the Methodist flight to abolitionism, they were more successful with the general population when they took the abolitionists to task for advocating black equality. New Hampshiremen resembled most northerners in that they had little regard for the rights of blacks. Indeed, most viewed slavery as a legitimate southern institution that should be free to operate without interference from "fanatical northerners." The Patriot continually extolled the virtues of the kind-hearted southern master, and reiterated the Democracy's support for the institution, even while acknowledging that certain evils might exist. Yet, on balance, the state's Democrats believed that the black man was best suited for slavery and should remain in bondage.⁸

Inasmuch as most New Hampshire citizens had few moral qualms over slavery, it was no surprise that they viewed the ideal of racial equality as "foreign" or "alien." It was unthinkable that slaves or free blacks could be considered morally, intellectually, or even legally equal with whites. Those who held such "diabolical" notions were therefore condemned as "niggers" or "niggerlovers." Upon receiving a complimentary copy of the Herald of Freedom, one incensed citizen from Andover, New Hampshire asked that he never

again be bothered by "this smutty concern"; the idea of racial equality advocated by "the Black Herald" was "such a dark thing."⁹

New Hampshirites were particularly shocked and appalled that the movement had attracted scores of women volunteers who led the numerous petition drives, spoke at conventions, and formed their own local anti-slavery societies. Referring to the outspoken Angelina and Sarah Grimke as "old maids," the New Hampshire Patriot reprimanded them for advocating freedom for "niggers" before a sexually-mixed audience. The Patriot would have published more on the Grimkes' efforts in Amesbury, Massachusetts, but the editor of the local paper in that town would not convey the entire story since the "promiscuous nature" of mixed audiences was so "indelicate that he feared its publication might injure the character of his paper."¹⁰ In similar fashion, the Democrats never tired of focusing upon the sexual theme. The Patriot sarcastically asked:

Why are all the old maids abolitionists? Because not being able to obtain white husbands, they think they may stand some chance for a nigger, if they can only make amalgamation fashionable.¹¹

According to the Jacksonians, freed slaves and other blacks--under the approving eyes of abolitionists--would swarm to white women and eventually pollute the race. At a local party gathering in Barnstead, Democrats passed resolutions denouncing the New Hampshire Anti-Slavery Society because it actively sought amalgamation of the races. One speaker asked:

Is the chaste and delicate female of our country prepared to regard the African as a fit companion for the nuptial couch? Is the American gentleman prepared to take the black woman as the wife of his bosom? The idea is disgusting!¹²

To underscore its charge that the anti-slavery crusade was working against the best interests of the white race, the Democratic press persistently condemned leading abolitionists and their paper in racial terms. Nathaniel P. Rogers was referred to as "Nigger Nat" or the "red-haired nigger demagogue"; Albe Cady was a "federalist nigger," and the Herald of Freedom was "the Nigger Herald." George Kent was reproached for allowing "niggers" to eat dinner at his table, while white servant girls ate theirs in his kitchen, thereby "degrading the white laborer below the level of the most illiterate and ignorant negro."¹³

If the anti-abolitionists in the state were disturbed by the plea for racial justice, they were equally disturbed by what they foresaw as real possibilities: the violation of the Constitutional rights of the South and the dissolution of the Republic. The concept of the Union was so sacred to the New Hampshire Democrats that they led a frenzied attack upon those who would destroy it. Both the northern abolitionists and the southern nullifiers--minorities in their respective sections--posed the major threat to the nation. As New Hampshire Democrats perceived the situation, both groups would seek the objects of their individual crusades at the expense of the Union. Therefore, they concluded, the Calhoun nullifiers and the northern abolitionists had probably struck a bargain to attack not only the Union but the "true" Democratic party that protected it.¹⁴

Both groups were attacked, but the nullifiers were denounced only mildly in New Hampshire Democratic circles because they were, after all, still Democrats. The abolitionists, however, were not,

and they were more numerous and widespread than the nullifiers. Hence, abolitionists posed the more serious threat to the Union.¹⁵

By advocating freedom for slaves, the abolitionists not only threatened the Union, but denied southerners their rights under the Constitution. If the southerners felt that their property was in any way jeopardized they would leave the Union. Therefore, the New Hampshire Democrats launched a campaign to reassure the South that abolitionists were a minority in the North and that most northerners were committed to slavery, which was guaranteed under the Constitution.

At an anti-abolitionist meeting in Franklin, the participants praised the "compromises" of the Constitution and urged northerners to convince the South that the vast majority of New Hampshiremen "not only acknowledge their [southerners'] rights, but are ready to aid in their defense." Compliance with the demands of the immediate emancipationists would be tantamount to "a violation of the Constitution of the United States, which expressly guaranteed to each State the exclusive right of legislating for its own citizens."¹⁶

Likewise, participants at an anti-abolitionist gathering at Meredith Bridge affirmed that the Constitution was "a sacred compact" that granted southerners the right to own slaves. The Meredith Bridge anti-abolitionists reassured the South that they continued to "regard this guarantee as inviolable" because no state had the right to tamper with the internal affairs of another state. True, slavery may be an evil, but southerners were not responsible for it; England had forced the unsuspecting colonies to adopt it early

in the seventeenth century. If the charge of injustice were to be made, it should be directed at England.¹⁷ Similarly, an anti-abolitionist meeting in Portsmouth urged the state legislature to pass laws "consistent with the Constitution" in order that the people of the South would be protected "from any movements in this state in regard to abolition."¹⁸

Democratic office holders took advantage of their positions in state government to soothe southern fears and to denounce the abolitionists. In his 1836 annual message to the state, Governor Isaac Hill defended slaveholders as kindly masters who steadfastly avoided whipping their slaves. Abolitionists, however, were "fire brands" who sought to incite slave rebellions. As an obligation to their sister states in the South, Hill declared, northern legislatures should make every attempt to muzzle the abolitionist fanatics.¹⁹

Democratic members in the New Hampshire House also struck a note of support for southern rights. Seeking to act favorably on several southern memorials presented to the law-makers urging penal enactments against the abolitionists, Democrats introduced resolutions placating the South and denouncing "those [northern] prophets of evil." While the House did not suppress the abolitionist press as southern law-makers had hoped, it nevertheless affirmed that the Constitution guaranteed the right to own slaves, that slavery should not be abolished in the District of Columbia, and that the abolitionists were undermining the spirit of national compromise. While some Whigs supported these resolutions, others defended the abolitionists' right of free discussion, arguing that any group had the right to print what it desired, even though "error of opinion" may be the

result. Some Whigs introduced their own resolutions that condemned the southern memorials as an interference with "the rights of the free citizens of the non-slaveholding states." The Whigs' counter-measures were met with scorn and contempt. In response to a Whig motion to dismiss the southern memorials, one Democratic representative sarcastically resolved that "it is inexpedient for this House to discuss the sublime merits of Southern Slavery, while Northern Slaves [Whigs] are required, by their Task Masters in gloves [abolitionists] to wear the collar and draw in the traces."²⁰

Whether at a Democratic party gathering, on the floor of the New Hampshire House, or at a special convention of anti-abolitionists, the themes of disunion and southern rights under the Constitution were continually discussed. Every county Democratic convention in 1835 and 1836 denounced the abolitionists as agents of disunion. From special state senatorial district conventions to town gatherings, the Democratic participants reiterated the rights of southern slaveholders and condemned the "fanatics" who threatened the Union.²¹

In the charged atmosphere of anti-abolitionist meetings, resolutions, and editorials, it was only a matter of time before some citizens resorted to physical means. In the 1830's, abolitionists everywhere were pelted with stones and eggs, chased from churches, and spat upon by an outraged populace. Anti-abolitionist spokesmen continually addressed the problem of mob violence in paradoxical and conflicting terms. While they discouraged physical assaults upon abolitionists, they nevertheless contributed to such actions by employing inflammatory language. After noting that it was "opposed to mobs and Lynch law of every description," the Democratic

New Hampshire Gazette continued by stating that "still, we shall not shed a tear in their [the abolitionists'] behalf, nor raise a cry against it, if every mother's son of them is dragged through a tar-barrel, and rolled in a feather bed."²²

Much of this sentiment was translated into action. The New Hampshire abolitionist agent George Storrs was dragged from the pulpit in Pittsfield's Congregational church and charged with "brawling." He was given three months hard labor but the conviction was reversed upon appeal. At the Baptist church in Newport, an anti-slavery meeting was disrupted after local anti-abolitionists threw bottles and rocks at the building. One rock was hurled into the church where it struck a woman in the back, while another left a large hole in the pulpit. The abolitionists were eventually driven away when one of the rowdies released a skunk in the church. At Cornish, a local anti-slavery minister discovered his church doors painted black and a black ram tied to his pulpit. In Portsmouth, anti-slavery minister David Root was chased from the Pleasant Street church and hounded through the streets.²³

Anti-abolitionists in Concord were especially active. In December, 1834, English abolitionist George Thompson was scheduled to speak at the organizational meeting of the Concord Female Anti-Slavery Society. Incensed that an "aristocratic" foreigner had the temerity to lecture democratic Americans on the evils of slavery, a group of angry citizens disrupted the meeting by breaking windows and shouting insults at the women. Thompson and the women were left unscathed by the incident, but in the late summer of 1835, the English abolitionist was not so fortunate.²⁴

Upon learning that Thompson and John Greenleaf Whittier were scheduled to speak in Concord on Friday, September 4, 1835, anti-abolitionists called a formal meeting the night before to counteract the "fanatics." Although participants were overwhelmingly local Democratic politicians and editors, the Whig leadership also attended, undoubtedly hoping to deflate the politically damaging accusation that they were pro-abolitionist. Resolutions were unanimously passed condemning the abolitionists for "engender[ing] strife between the different states . . . and perilling our happy Union." The Concord anti-abolitionists also voiced displeasure that "foreign emissaries" and "domestic incendiaries" were propagating doctrines that could lead to a "servile war."²⁵

Although the participants denounced "all violent proceedings and outrages upon person and property, and all illegal notions of executing summary justice in any mode not sanctioned by law,"²⁶ it was not enough to placate a hostile populace, which assembled at the Concord Court House where the abolitionist meeting was to be held. In an attempt to forestall violence, the sheriff locked the Court House doors preventing the abolitionists from meeting. Undeterred, the angry group began scouring the streets for Thompson and Whittier. They were eventually successful and the two were pelted with rotten eggs and chased to the home of George Kent, a local anti-slavery leader. Intent on "punishing" the foreigner Thompson, the crowd made its way to Kent's home and demanded "the aristocrat." But Thompson successfully eluded his pursuers by ducking into a nearby woods. When the sheriff arrived and assured the anti-abolitionists that Thompson was not on the property, the

mob contented itself with making an effigy of the Englishman and burning it on the State House lawn, accompanied by fireworks and the discharge of cannons. Both Thompson and Whittier eventually left town under disguise.²⁷

After noting its disapproval of mob violence, the Patriot proclaimed that had Thompson fallen into the hands of the outraged "multitude" he would "have got what he has long deserved, a coat of tar and feathers, and a ride upon a rail, if nothing worse."²⁸ Even a portion of the Whig press was upset with the activities of the Concord abolitionists. The Exeter News-Letter, like the Patriot, did not condone violence, yet it voiced its displeasure at "foreigners" and all those "tainted with Abolition principles."²⁹

Although Concord was the site of several tumultuous crowds, anti-abolitionist frenzy reached its peak in Canaan where all the issues raised by anti-abolitionists found emotional expression. The idea of a private school at Canaan had received the backing of sixty townspeople and in June, 1834, Noyes Academy was incorporated by the state legislature. No mention was made of converting it into a racially integrated school, even though a sizeable minority of the proprietors were abolitionists. On July 4, however, the abolitionist proprietors, "acting upon the principle of the Declaration of Independence," proposed to open the doors to black students, and on August 16, 1834, a proprietors' meeting debated the issue. Of the sixty original proprietors, thirty-six voted in favor of admitting blacks, fourteen voted against, and two abstained while the remainder stayed at home. With the plan adopted, the proprietors selected a Board of Trustees, all ten of whom were abolitionists, and only four

of whom resided in Canaan. Nathaniel P. Rogers of Plymouth and George Kent of Concord, two well-known New Hampshire abolitionists, were included. Bostonians Samuel Sewall and David Lee Child agreed to serve as trustees, as did Dr. Samuel Cox of New York City. In addition, abolitionist William Scales, a senior at Andover Theological Seminary, was hired as the instructor. Financial difficulties kept the school doors closed until March, 1835; but when the school finally opened, fourteen black and twenty-eight white students were admitted.³⁰

Soon after classes began, townspeople openly expressed their fear and anger that blacks were residing in Canaan. Unsubstantiated rumors soon spread throughout the town. A colony of shiftless black vagabonds would follow the students and permanently settle in Canaan, erecting huts on the major streets.³¹ For the abolitionist press, other rumors were "too indecent" to be related, but outspoken townsmen and the Democratic press never tired of keeping the public informed of the possible consequences. Blacks were seen "arm in arm" with white girls and George Kimball, a trustee who was most active in promoting "the promiscuous education of black and white scholars" had, on occasion, served dinner to black boys while a white servant girl waited upon them.³²

Suddenly, for the Canaanites, abolitionists and the blacks that they had befriended were perceived as real threats, just as anti-abolitionists everywhere had long argued. Certainly the fear of amalgamation was a central concern, but this was compounded by the fact that 60% of the trustees were "outsiders," some located as far away as Portland, Boston, and New York City. In addition

those trustees living in Canaan and vicinity were close friends of the English arch-villain, George Thompson. Clearly, there was only one way to control Canaan's deteriorating situation: townsmen would take quick action to remove "the nigger school" from their presence.

On July 4, 1835, about seventy people stormed the academy with "bludgeons, missiles, etc." However, the crowd was frightened into retreat when a local judge appeared and began taking names. A week later, undeterred anti-abolitionist leaders decided to sanction their actions with legal authority.³³ On July 31, they called a special town meeting where more than 80% registered their opposition to Noyes Academy and announced that they were "determined to take effectual measures to remove it." It was further resolved that the abolitionists in Canaan were the agents of "designing demagogues and desperate politicians abroad" and were motivated "by the love of gain [more] than the love of God or man."³⁴ In addition, the meeting resolved:

From what our eyes have seen and our ears have heard, respecting the close intimacy that exists between some of the Coloured boys and white females, we believe if suffered to go on it will not be long before we shall have living evidence of an amalgamation of blood.³⁵

Furthermore, the Noyes Academy was declared "a public nuisance and it is the duty of the town to take immediate measures to remove said nuisance." The town then voted to remove the school from its foundation on August 10, 1835, commencing at 7:00 A.M. "and continu[ing] without intermission until the moving of said building is completed." To expedite matters, a "Superintending Committee" was appointed by the town to oversee the removal of the academy.³⁶

Protests by the abolitionists that the Noyes Academy was a private school on private property fell on deaf ears. "With the Spirit of '75" a large "legal assemblage" consisting of three hundred Canaanites and sympathizers from nearby towns gathered on the morning of August 10. With the aid of one hundred oxen and several dozen chains, the townspeople wrenched the building from its foundation and dragged it into a nearby swamp "where it now stands . . . as a monument of the folly of those . . . who are struggling to destroy what our fathers have gained."³⁷

After the task was accomplished "with very little noise," a number of resolutions were passed condemning the abolitionists as "a combination of disorganizers, led on by an Englishman, sent to this country to sow seeds of discord and contention between the North and the South." In addition, resolutions were passed lauding the Constitution as a sacred compromise between the sections, praising the Revolutionary patriots from both the North and the South, and affirming that the "patriots" of New Hampshire would always "fight for the rights and privileges of their southern brethren . . . so long as there is a man that can shoulder or handle a musket." A leader of the anti-abolitionists then praised the participants "for their efficient and energetic assistance on the occasion." Before retiring for the evening, a few anti-abolitionists discharged a small cannon under the windows of several leading abolitionists.³⁸

Unlike most "collective activity" in ante-bellum America, the Canaan experience was remarkable for its relatively peaceful quality. The New Hampshire Patriot applauded its "business-like manner" while

the participants publicly congratulated themselves for having acted within the law, since every course of action in the incident had been voted on and approved by the majority of the citizens at a town meeting. Abolitionist papers throughout the New England area denounced the action as "lynch proceedings" but the Patriot dismissed these charges and defended the Canaanites' "mild practices" of halting "treasonable practices of the . . . anti-slavery fanatics."³⁹ The Patriot warned that if mild measures would not stop the abolitionists then "stronger ones will be justified." Furthermore, "the nigger school" was not destroyed by rabble, but by respectable people, one of whom was

a deacon of the orthodox church and one of the most respectable and sedate persons in the town, [one] who would be the last to countenance riot and disorder. We repeat, no violation of either law or order was committed.⁴⁰

Anti-abolitionists praised themselves for quickly moving to eradicate the source of their displeasure; yet, the tumult in Canaan was not merely a reaction to the twin threats of race mongrelization and dissolution of the Union, although these clearly were powerful ingredients. The destruction of Noyes Academy was the culmination of tensions that had been simmering for at least a decade. Within an atmosphere of social and religious strife, "abolitionist demagoguery" took on new and special meaning, for it appears that the anti-slavery crusade soon served as a convenient scapegoat for all that was amiss in the changing and contentious town.

A number of factors led to the heightened frustrations and anxieties in Canaan which, when isolated, were not enough to seriously provoke the townspeople. But Canaanites could not isolate single experiences. Indeed, they interpreted single events as

components of a larger, fundamental, and highly visible pattern of events. Unfortunately for the abolitionists, they were perceived as central to every problem the town faced in the 1830's. By destroying Noyes Academy residents of Canaan were attacking the abolitionists; by attacking the abolitionists, they were attempting to deal with the source of all their problems.

The arrival of new residents, many of whom became abolitionists, may have played a role in Canaan's problems, although there is nothing in the town records, anti-abolitionist resolutions, or publicly-stated grievances that would verify this as a central concern. But perhaps at the subconscious level, the new residents served as a source of contention. Whatever the case, the figures are nevertheless suggestive. Out of the 42 identifiable Canaan abolitionists, the geographical origin could only be determined for 17. Twelve of the 17 (70%) migrated to the town after 1810. Even more suggestive is the fact that the leading anti-abolitionists in Canaan were long-time residents. Graphic differences between abolitionists and their persecutors are best illustrated by the Canaan Vigilance Committee, a body created in 1836 ostensibly to monitor local abolitionist activity. The Vigilance Committee consisted of 22 of the most active anti-abolitionists in Canaan, and of the 15 which could be identified, 14 (93.3%) were members of families that had settled in the town as early as the 1760's and 1770's.⁴¹

Of course, not all newcomers were abolitionists. But a central tenet for the state's anti-abolitionists held that abolitionists were "outsiders" who advocated a dangerous and "alien" doctrine. Such a consideration may have struck a responsive chord for the residents

of Canaan. Certainly the point was not lost upon worried townsmen that 60% of the school's trustees lived outside Canaan and that the school would attract scores of black outsiders. Indeed, George Kimball, the acknowledged leader of the anti-slavery forces and the leading proponent of the "nigger school," had moved to Canaan from the Bahamas as late as 1824, accompanied by a "jet black" servant girl. Worse, Kimball had acted with Nathaniel P. Rogers in recruiting the non-Canaan board members and, in addition, he openly had suggested that all black students room at his private residence. Hence, not only were many abolitionists newly-settled residents, but they were in turn perceived to be opening the flood gates for more.⁴²

A problem closely related to the influx of newcomers was the town's slow, but highly visible, economic and physical alteration. The once overwhelmingly agricultural town--"one of the pleasantest country villages you ever saw"⁴³--was attracting newcomers who not only advocated racial equality but who were also instrumental in creating small manufacturing and commercial enterprises. Two outspoken abolitionists--one settling in Canaan in 1815 and the other in 1832--erected and managed the town's only woolen factory. In addition, the manufacturing of ashes, a lucrative enterprise in Canaan, was largely controlled by abolitionists. Townspeople who desperately sought ashes discovered that money "was not easy to get and the demand for ashes became greater than the demand of firewood." Moreover, if a townsman wanted to purchase linen imported from Boston, he would have to deal with an abolitionist; likewise, if a farmer required a hammer or other hardware he would be forced to do business with an abolitionist.⁴⁴ Indeed, while the abolitionists

constituted one third of all "manufacturers and traders" within the town, they were nevertheless engaged in businesses that were noticeably larger than most of their non-abolitionist counterparts. But as a group, the abolitionists deviated markedly from the occupational norm of the town. An overwhelming number of identifiable abolitionists (66.7%) were engaged in manufacturing and trade, compared with only 15% of those members of the Vigilance Committee. Table 7 illustrates the occupational differences between Canaan's abolitionists and their outspoken critics.

Perhaps the abolitionists' occupational composition by itself was not enough to create friction in the predominantly agricultural town. Nevertheless, by the very nature of their work, abolitionists certainly stood apart from the majority of their townsmen. Moreover, the anti-abolitionist press, especially the Patriot, was adept at fanning the flames of resentment by its continual denunciations of the abolitionists' economic and occupational status. Abolitionists, the Patriot charged, had been "deliberately planned and got up for the benefit of the Aristocracy and the United States Bank."⁴⁵ Individual abolitionists were often portrayed as grasping parasites who emerged from a "superior station" in society and who often defended "soulless corporations" and banks. Too refined to do their own daily chores, abolitionists hired "white servants to do their work." In addition, abolitionists were depicted as individuals motivated solely by "money making" ventures. Indeed, those most responsible for the Noyes Academy were condemned for taking the school "into their own hands" in order that "it might be made a

Table 7. Occupations in Canaan.

	Abolitionists	Vigilance Committee	Entire Town
Manufacturing and Trade	66.7% (18)	15.8% (3)	18.7% (55)
Agriculture	22.2 (6)	84.2 (16)	75.2 (221)
Other	11.1 (3)	0	6.1 (18)
	100.0 (27)	100.0 (19)	100.0 (294)

Source: Population Schedules of the Sixth Census of the United States, 1840, National Archives Microfilm Publications, Microcopy #704, Roll 237, Vol. II, pp. 139-284.

money-making business." Probably many citizens of Canaan eventually believed as one discontented citizen did, that wealthy abolitionists had made "great efforts . . . to overwhelm and control the town by means of an imported black population."⁴⁶

In contrast, the most active anti-abolitionists in Canaan were portrayed as hard-working farmers who, while boasting a degree of wealth, shunned fine clothes and proudly displayed "strong heads, honest hearts and 'huge paws.'"⁴⁷ Apparently, wealth itself was not a crucial distinction between "aristocratic" abolitionists and hard-working farmers; rather, the distinction clearly rested on how that wealth was obtained. If anti-abolitionist leaders enjoyed a measure of wealth it was the result of obtaining their profits "honestly," in the traditional mode of farming. Perhaps it was no accident that those who destroyed Noyes Academy were "many of the most respectable and wealthy farmers of this and the adjacent towns."⁴⁸

Other sources of tension in Canaan were inclined to be either more individual or personal in nature and, in each instance, the abolitionists were viewed as the instigators in fomenting the bitterness. For instance, the Methodist, Baptist, and Congregational churches were all divided over the anti-slavery debate and, according to one Baptist official, the severity of the debate was partially responsible for the decrease in church attendance.⁴⁹ The recently-appointed Congregational minister was so outspokenly pro-abolitionist that he succeeded in driving away many non-abolitionists. One resentful Congregationalist charged that the anti-slavery minister "has seen fit in his wisdom to take up arms against me because I am a Jackson man."⁵⁰

In addition, abolitionist lawyers living in other towns occasionally defended unpopular cases in Canaan, much to the residents' chagrin. The "firebrand" Nathaniel P. Rogers was especially active in the town, often lending his skills to an amazingly incompetent--and newly settled--local abolitionist attorney.⁵¹

The abolitionists were also blamed for disrupting the local Masonic order which counted among its members practically all of the town leaders and future anti-abolitionists. Soon after he had settled in Canaan, abolitionist George Kimball began "investigating" the order. He was eventually joined by other abolitionists who harshly condemned Masonic "treacheries." These assaults ultimately led to a serious decline in membership. Abolitionists who were Masons soon left their order and threatened to reveal the "secrets" they had learned while members. Not surprisingly, abolitionist assaults and the subsequent Masonic defense of the order created widespread bitterness in the town. Indeed, in the summer of 1835, the severely splintered Masons placed the blame for their decline directly at the feet of local abolitionists. Abolitionists soon represented not only "the seed of Toryism" and the "Spirit of the Hartford Convention" but "the scum of Antimasonry" as well.⁵²

Undoubtedly, Canaanites were offended and insulted by the new black residents, and that fact alone may explain the destruction of Noyes Academy. It is possible, however, in light of the contentious nature of the town, that the presence of blacks was viewed as the culmination of a series of abuses inflicted by interloping abolitionists. By destroying Noyes Academy, the citizens of Canaan were

perhaps destroying a symbol of the changing times; conceivably, by "pulling down" the school they were attempting to re-establish their grip in a town which was attracting new faces, new occupations, and new ideas. Indeed, most townsmen would have little difficulty affirming the sentiments of the record-keeper for Canaan's Baptist church who not only worried about the course of the church, but the course of the town as well: "We have ben [sic] led to exclaim Oh that it was with us as it was in days that are past and gone."⁵³

CHAPTER IV

NOTES

¹ The term "anti-abolitionist" is used to describe those individuals who actively denounced, attacked, or sought to silence the abolitionists. A "non-abolitionist" was one who may not have been as animated as an anti-abolitionist, but who nevertheless could not endorse freedom for the slave. For a discussion on the various forms and activities of anti-abolition, see Leonard Richards, "Gentlemen of Property and Standing": Anti-Abolition Mobs in Jacksonian America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), and Lorman Ratner, Powder Keg: Northern Opposition to the Anti-Slavery Movement, 1831-1840 (New York: Basic Books, 1968).

² Patriot, May 23, 1836.

³ Liberator, December 13, 1834.

⁴ Ibid., March 14 and March 28, 1835.

⁵ Patriot, August 22, 1836. ". . . every movement shows conclusively that the whole business of abolition was deliberately planned and got up by the opposition party for political effect."

⁶ Ibid., April 21, 28, 1834; May 5 and August 10, 1835; March 28, 1836.

⁷ Ibid., September 14, September 21, October 5, October 12, and November 30, 1835. The Democrats may have over-reacted for, while they could not undermine the efforts of many of the state's pro-abolitionist Methodists, towns with overwhelming numbers of Methodists remained in the Democratic fold. (See Chapter III)

⁸ See, for example, Ibid., August 3, 1835; June 28, 1836; July 15, 1839.

⁹ Herald of Freedom, April 2, 1836.

¹⁰ Patriot, July 31, 1837.

¹¹ Ibid., August 14, 1837.

¹² Ibid., September 28, 1835. Upon learning that William Lloyd Garrison had referred to the Concord, New Hampshire Priestcraft Exposed as a "scurrilous paper," the editor mockingly retorted: "Much obliged to the nigger editor, for his compliment. We take it that the reason why he did not send us his paper containing this

compliment, was he found himself so pleasantly situated on the parlor sofa, with some of Arthur Tappan's Negro wenches, and being so delighted with the 'odoriferous effluvia' which would naturally arise this hot weather, that he forgot us." Reprinted in the Liberator, July 26, 1834.

¹³ Patriot, December 24, 1838; January 7, 1839, March 4, 1839, February 4, 1837. Anti-slavery conventions were usually referred to as "nigger conventions." See Patriot, April 25, 1836.

¹⁴ Ibid., January 11, 1836; Liberator, February 27, 1836.

¹⁵ Even though New Hampshire Democrats were harshest with the abolitionists, they were capable of crossing swords with the nullifiers. After John C. Calhoun urged that the Senate not accept an anti-slavery petition from New Hampshire Quakers, Senator Isaac Hill arose and assured southern listeners that abolitionism was not a broad-based movement, at least not in New Hampshire. The abolitionists in the Granite State consisted of a "few misguided fanatics"; they were mere hirelings "disguised in the character of ministers of the Gospel to preach abolition of slavery." Then Hill directed his ire at the nullifiers, noting that South Carolina's 1832 showdown with the federal government had ended in "deep disgrace." Angered, Calhoun produced a copy of the Herald of Freedom and noted that, by all appearances, the anti-slavery crusade was stronger than Hill had suggested. Hill meekly responded that indeed, the Herald of Freedom was published in Concord but the abolitionists were too ashamed to circulate the paper in the area; it was, he continued, produced for "foreign consumption." When the Patriot learned of the Hill-Calhoun exchange, it condemned the "arch-nullifier" and charged that the South Carolina Senator was in league with abolitionists. See Cole, Jacksonian Democracy in New Hampshire, pp. 180-81; Patriot, February 29, 1836.

¹⁶ Patriot, September 14, 1835.

¹⁷ Ibid., September 28, 1835.

¹⁸ Exeter News-Letter, September 15, 1835.

¹⁹ Liberator, June 25, 1836.

²⁰ Ibid., January 21 and February 11, 1837; Patriot, January 16, 1837.

²¹ See, for instance, Patriot, October 12, 1835; January 25, February 1, February 8, and February 15, 1836. At a Democratic gathering in Hillsborough, New Hampshire, one loyal Jacksonian toasted the party's enemies: "The Tories of '75--those of the present day, and the abolitionists. Unworthy of life, too mean to die, unworthy of heaven, too scandalous for hell: may they be conveyed by some angel of darkness beyond the knowledge of either."

²² New Hampshire Gazette, reprinted in Ibid., August 31, 1835.

23 Liberator, April 16, 1836; December 3, 1836; April 30, 1838; Patriot, November 21, 1836. Defending the "brawling" charge brought against Storrs, the prosecuting attorney asked: "Has there not been an insult offered by the defendant to-day not only to this town, but to these states? Is it come to this? Must the institutions of our country be thus abused with impunity? We are not advocating slavery [but] has not the defendant railed against these laws, and abused the southern confederacy to-day?" Liberator, April 16, 1836.

24 Ibid., December 6 and December 13, 1834; Exeter News-Letter, November 25, 1834.

25 Patriot, September 7, 1835.

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid.; Ibid., September 14 and September 21, 1835. The Patriot claimed that the "Nigger Herald" and Whittier had libeled the people of Concord by suggesting that members of the mob were drunk. On the contrary, the Patriot countered, "the citizens who composed that assemblage were as respectable people as any there is in town." Patriot, September 21, 1835.

28 Ibid., September 14, 1835.

29 Exeter News-Letter, September 15, 1835.

30 Patriot, September 28, 1835; Liberator, October 3, 1835. A discussion of the Canaan incident may be found in William Allen Wallace, History of Canaan, New Hampshire (Concord: The Rumford Press, 1910), pp. 255-296.

31 Wallace, p. 268.

32 Patriot, August 17, 1835; Wallace, p. 270.

33 Liberator, October 3, 1835.

34 Patriot, August 10, 1835.

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid., August 17, 1835; Liberator, September 5, 1835.

38 Liberator, September 5 and October 10, 1835.

39 Patriot, September 7, 1835.

40 Ibid.

41 Information on residence and occupation has been compiled from Wallace, pp. 583-655. Members of the Vigilance Committee can be found in Wallace and in the Patriot, December 26, 1836.

42 Wallace, p. 320.

43 William Weeks to A.A. Phelps, June 14, 1830, ASC-BPL.

44 Wallace, pp. 452-55.

45 Patriot, August 24, 1835.

46 Ibid., August 10, 1835; Wallace, pp. 260-62.

47 Patriot, February 14, 1839.

48 Ibid., September 7, 1835.

49 Wallace, pp. 227-37; Records of the Canaan Baptist Church, 1833-1836, NHHS.

50 William Weeks to A.A. Phelps, June 14, 1830, ASC-BPL.

51 Wallace, pp. 320-23.

52 Ibid., pp. 484-87; Patriot, January 21, 1837.

53 Records of the Canaan Baptist Church, 1833-1836, NHHS.

PART II

By the late 1830's, New Hampshire abolitionists generated controversy not only with non-abolitionists, but among themselves as well. Serious disagreements over ideological and tactical considerations eventually led to a split within the Granite State abolitionist community. From the split emerged two groups: a radical wing that eschewed politics and roundly condemned the clergy, and a conservative wing that sought to end slavery through political power and the influence of organized religion. Precise figures are difficult to determine, but it appears that both groups attracted about an equal number of followers, especially in the early 1840's. Yet, the radicals were better organized and, while always lacking funds, were financially stable enough to consolidate their organization --a feat that their conservative rivals were unable to accomplish. As a result, the political abolitionists languished until 1844 when finally they were not only able to attract more followers, but were also able to support a vigorous newspaper. Until that time, the radicals held sway in the Granite State and offered a brand of abolitionism that antagonized their foes and even startled the more conventional members of the abolitionist community, both within and outside of New Hampshire.

CHAPTER V

SCHISM

When the New Hampshire Anti-Slavery Society was created in 1835, few people would have thought that in five short years the organization would be in shambles, the product of internecine warfare. Yet, by the summer of 1840, abolitionists not only denounced slavery, but each other as well. Men and women unwilling to sacrifice or bend their principles engaged in rancorous public debate that served to irreparably divide the NHASS. What explains the schism in New Hampshire? Why were abolitionists suddenly unable to compromise on issues? To understand the split in the New Hampshire anti-slavery ranks, it is first necessary to analyze the disruption of the American Anti-Slavery Society, for the debate within the national organization seriously affected the Granite State abolitionists.

William Lloyd Garrison's role is central to an understanding of the rising tensions within the American abolitionist movement. This is not to imply that he necessarily caused the 1840 split; indeed, historian Aileen Kraditor has reevaluated Garrison's role and has concluded that his opponents--the "conservatives"--were responsible for narrowing the anti-slavery platform.¹ Nevertheless, Garrison, in articulating "extraneous topics," as his opponents called them, elicited responses that ultimately could not be compromised.

In late 1837 Garrison announced that the Liberator would address "other topics," although anti-slavery would always be the "grand

object of our labors." He assured his readers that the "other topics" were not divorced from the anti-slavery cause; rather, they were "intimately connected with the great doctrine of inalienable human rights." He further assured his audience that these new areas of discussion would not conflict with any sect or political party and that anyone who disagreed with his views would be allowed to voice his objections in the Liberator. Nevertheless, these new topics were "pregnant with momentous consequences to the freedom, equality, and happiness of mankind."²

Garrison told his fellow abolitionists that in addition to anti-slavery, the cause of "non-resistance" would be advanced. Specifically, he would argue in forthcoming issues that all human governments were "anti-Christ" and "that the kingdoms of this world are to become kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ." Indeed, human governments "are to be viewed as judicial punishments." Christians, he intoned, should "come out NOW, and be separate from 'the kingdoms of this world,' which are based upon THE PRINCIPLE OF VIOLENCE."³

True to his word, throughout 1838, Garrison focused on the evils of human government and in September he wrote the Declaration of Sentiments for his newly-formed Non-Resistance Society. If fellow-abolitionists had any doubts as to the extent the Bostonian had gone, these doubts were quickly dispelled. In the Declaration, Garrison wrote:

We cannot acknowledge allegiance to any human government, neither can we oppose any such government by a resort to physical force. We recognize but one KING and LAWGIVER, one JUDGE and RULER of mankind. We are bound by the laws of a kingdom which is not of this world, the subjects of which Mercy and Truth are met together, and Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other. We register our testimony,

not only against all war, but against all preparation for war.

Garrison carried these sentiments to their logical conclusion by denouncing politics and political office:

As every human government is upheld by physical strength, and its laws are enforced virtually at the point of a bayonet, we cannot hold any office which imposes upon its incumbent the obligation to compel men to do right, on pain of imprisonment or death. We therefore voluntarily exclude ourselves from every legislative and judicial body, and repudiate all human politics, worldly honors, and stations of authority.⁴

While denouncing all government and politics, Garrison lent his support to the principle of women's rights since, as he stated in his Prospectus for 1838, "our object is universal emancipation." Women had long played a role in the anti-slavery cause, from organizing local female anti-slavery societies to serving as fund-raisers in various towns and counties throughout the North. But when Angelina and Sarah Grimke "promiscuously" spoke to "mixed" audiences, not only were most non-abolitionists upset, but a sizeable contingent of abolitionists as well. Garrison, however, believed that women--and specifically, the Grimkes--had every right to speak for the slave since the Constitution of the AASS stated that all "persons" could become members. If slaves were to enjoy freedom, women should likewise be free, not only in American society at large but in anti-slavery circles as well.⁵

Garrison also intensified his attacks on the nation's clergy because, in his own mind, ministers had not done enough to assist in the "holy cause." Not only did he condemn clergymen for ignoring the slavery issue but, in one instance, declared that the Methodist General Conference represented a "cage of unclean birds and synagogue

of Satan." Such denunciations were appropriate according to Garrison because if a church body shields "a system of prostitution and adultery," then it should be called nothing less. Garrison further announced that he stood aloof from all sects, just as he stood aloof from all political parties.⁶ If that were not enough, he also declared that there was no scriptural authority for the divinity of the Sabbath.⁷

Garrison's anti-clerical stance, his support for women's rights, and his adoption of non-resistance with its ultimate denial of politics and its censure of human government alienated many abolitionists who thought that he had overstepped the conventional bounds of anti-slavery agitation. Even though Garrison consistently asserted that the anti-slavery platform was broad enough to contain abolitionists holding various views, his opponents remained unconvinced. Indeed, they not only attacked him, but declared him to be a heretic, arguing that the "Boston Clique" was attempting to exclude all those who would not accept Garrison's views. But historian Aileen Kraditor has persuasively shown that the "conservatives" were the exclusionists:

What [Garrison's] opponents were really objecting to, then, was that advocates of women's rights and the other eccentric causes belonged to antislavery societies at all. The conservatives' philosophy of abolitionism required the American Society and its auxiliaries to be officially orthodox on all subjects besides antislavery, explicitly repudiating what were then called "ultraisms." Their aim was to show white Northerners that anti-slavery was respectable and perfectly compatible with conventional views on all other questions. Since they themselves held conventional views on those other questions, they were . . . fighting to prevent abolition from being publicly portrayed in a false light and from being used as a cover for the propagation of false doctrines. The Garrisonians were developing a theory of abolitionist organization that required complete toleration within the society of members with all sorts of views and therefore a very minimal platform on which all abolitionists could stand

regardless of their opinions on other issues. . . . A Garrison-type movement could thus include the conservatives, but the conservatives' type of movement could not include the "ultraists." [As a result] the conservatives . . . tried to read the radicals out of the movement.⁸

Once Garrison had hoisted the flag of women's rights, anti-clericalism, and non-resistance--or "no-government" to the conservatives--the debate among abolitionists proceeded unabated until a final resolution was reached at the 1840 AASS convention. Conservatives were unable to accept Garrison's positions, especially when, as Kraditor has shown, "they themselves held conventional views." Methodist minister Orange Scott voiced representative objections to Garrison's "extraneous issues" by noting that "if any good is to grow out of this urging women forward to public action and office in promiscuous assemblies, I confess I am so dull as not to see it." Likewise, Scott was perplexed by the non-resistance principle. If all abolitionists refused to run for office or refused to vote, then it was apparent that pro-slavery forces would be entrenched more deeply into American political institutions. Government, he warned, should be reformed, not destroyed; who would reform it "if good men abandon it?"⁹

Garrison's non-resistance philosophy was especially disconcerting for many abolitionists because it rejected politics and denounced anti-slavery legislation as being a use of force and, therefore, morally corrupt. But by the late 1830's political action was touted by abolitionists who realized that mere "moral suasion" was not persuading slaveholders to free their "property." As one abolitionist noted:

If ever slavery and the slave-trade are abolished in

[Washington D.C.], it will be by legislation. The people in their political capacity must do it. . . . Shall we continue to say that slavery is our great national-political sin, and yet, as members of the body politic, make no effort to purge ourselves from it? . . . By exerting a political influence, we shall extend our moral influence.¹⁰

Francis Jackson of Massachusetts likewise argued that politics was essential to effect the release of slaves. For Jackson, the use of politics should not be viewed as a separate mode of action; in fact, moral convictions could be registered through political means. It made little sense to ignore the avenue of politics, especially if it ultimately freed the slave.¹¹ New York abolitionist William Goodell argued in his Friend of Man that slavery was established by law and that laws were created by state and national legislatures. Clearly, Goodell argued, the abolition of slavery was "nothing more nor less than the repeal of these slave laws," and political activity was the only way abolitionists could effect such a goal.¹²

In fairness to Garrison, it must be established that he was capable of distinguishing between his personal non-resistant principles and the political expediency of anti-slavery action. Once again, as Kraditor has illustrated, while Garrison condemned both parties, he could accept "negative" voting; that is, he believed abolitionists could "scatter" their votes by writing in an anti-slavery candidate. In a pro-abolitionist district, this activity could possibly provide enough pressure to persuade the other parties to adopt a more anti-slavery outlook. To argue that Garrison shunned every form of political activity is to misread the Liberator:

They [Garrisonians and conservatives] agreed that the two parties were corrupt and the servants of the slave power, but they proposed different ways of reforming them.

According to the radicals, the parties were corrupt because the people were. Only a reformed public opinion could reform the parties in any meaningful, lasting way.¹³

While it is true that Garrison did not insist that all abolitionists refrain from voting and while he could urge many to "scatter" their votes, the distinction was lost on most conservatives. Garrison was first and foremost a non-resistant, and non-resistants shunned politics. Besides, Garrison championed other causes, and if he were to be taken at his word--and he insisted that he should--these extraneous issues could not be separated from one another. This was all very annoying to the conservatives, who wanted to concentrate only on the slave, and not be distracted by Garrison's stance on "woman's sphere," his glorification of "no-government," and his vitriolic assaults on the clergy.

By raising these issues, Garrison forced abolitionists of all stripes to ask a momentous question: in what manner shall the anti-slavery cause proceed? For Garrison, abolitionists could pursue a number of tactics, but he would follow and advocate the dictates of his conscience. Yet, for conservatives, Garrison's conscience was not the issue. Because of his national prominence, Garrison's influence was so great that many non-abolitionists viewed him as the embodiment of the cause. As such, Garrison's radicalism probably would frighten those who might eventually be converted to abolitionism. Seen in this light, Garrison was therefore not only misrepresenting a sizeable contingent of abolitionists, but undermining the entire movement. In effect, Garrison himself had become an issue and, as a result, by the late 1830's abolitionists throughout the country were lining up with or against him. Debates among these groups grew

increasingly shrill until the AASS split in May, 1840.

Abolitionists in New Hampshire were not immune to the growing divisions within the national movement, although Joseph Horace Kimball, editor of the Herald of Freedom, attempted to moderate the disputes. In August, 1837, Kimball defended Garrison against the charges raised by the "Clerical Appeal," an anti-Garrison attack levelled by five Massachusetts clergymen who denounced the Bostonian's "extraneous causes" and his harsh condemnations of the clergy. Kimball noted that harsh language directed at ministers was justified because clergymen had not embraced abolitionism. Nevertheless, the New Hampshire editor was uncomfortable with some of the anti-clerical charges because they had been too broad and too sweeping and "have breathed little of the spirit of charity and kindness." Kimball also noted that the "no government" theory, which particularly provoked the five ministers, was not--or should not be--essential to the anti-slavery cause. "We, for one, have no sympathy with it," he announced. Furthermore, anti-slavery societies should exist for anti-slavery only. Kimball's mixed judgment of Garrison went further; while the Bostonian had sacrificed a great deal for the cause, he had nevertheless erred. While Kimball did not "like all that appears in the Liberator," he was capable of recognizing that Garrison was essential to the anti-slavery cause. Therefore, all abolitionists in the United States, including those in New Hampshire, should be willing to support Garrison but, at the same time, urge that he amend his "errors."¹⁴

With his qualified support of Garrison, Kimball was obviously

attempting to steer a neutral course in New Hampshire. But it was becoming increasingly evident that tensions within the movement could not be eased. At its meeting of 1837 the New England Anti-Slavery Society passed harsh resolutions condemning American churches and political action. Since women were allowed to participate actively in the 1838 meeting, several outraged conservatives, led by the Reverend Charles Torrey, asked that their names be expunged from the rolls.¹⁵ Because New Hampshire abolitionists either attended these meetings or read the proceedings, they were brought closer to the center of the debates. By 1838 New Hampshire abolitionists were taking sides, Kimball's cautioning advice notwithstanding.

Garrison's extraneous issues, which served to divide the New Hampshire abolitionists, were brought into sharper focus after Nathaniel Peabody Rogers was designated the new editor of the Herald of Freedom. In the spring of 1838, the twenty-four year-old Kimball died unexpectedly and the Board of Managers of the NHASS chose Rogers to replace him. Rogers had been a frequent contributor to the Herald and he was a highly visible functionary at numerous state and county conventions in New Hampshire. In addition, he was well-liked and it was thought that he was fair-minded, an attribute that the Board members undoubtedly viewed as an essential ingredient. But if abolitionists in New Hampshire thought he would take a neutral course in the ever-growing contentious atmosphere plaguing the movement, they were soon to be disillusioned. Whether accurately or not, Rogers was soon perceived as an unbending "ultra" whose support of Garrison drove the wedge of disunion among members of the NHASS.

Born at Plymouth, New Hampshire, in 1794, Rogers enjoyed a financially secure childhood and, upon the urging of his physician father, attended Dartmouth and eventually read for the law. In the 1820's Rogers supported a variety of religious and philanthropic causes, including temperance and colonization. When an abolitionist agent was directed to his Plymouth law office, a horrified Rogers refused to speak with him. But after reading Garrison's works and other anti-slavery literature, he converted to the cause and, in late 1833, formed the Plymouth Anti-Slavery Society, the first abolitionist organization in the state.¹⁶

With his frequent contributions to the Herald and the Liberator, and with his outspoken resolutions at numerous conventions, Rogers soon became widely known not only in New Hampshire but throughout the rest of the country as well. Garrison praised him repeatedly. In urging New Hampshire abolitionists to choose Rogers as the new editor of the Herald, the Bostonian noted that "Nothing emanates from that mind, or is recorded by that pen, which is not characterized by originality, strength and power."¹⁷ The editor of the Madison County (New York) Abolitionist exclaimed that Rogers was "one of the richest, raciest writers this country possesses."¹⁸

Even prior to his editorship of the Herald, Rogers held views that undoubtedly served to cause some discomfort among clergymen and conservative abolitionists. At the 1837 NHASS convention he had introduced a series of resolutions condemning American churches as "the most formidable obstacle in ending slavery."¹⁹ He was also capable of assaulting some of the most hallowed symbols in the land. The United States Senate was condemned as "that ungodly body," and

the Fourth of July was denigrated as a "poor old prostituted, rum-soaked, powder-smoked anniversary."²⁰

Rogers was especially outspoken in his support for Garrison. As early as 1837 Rogers condemned those "fastidious and fault-finding" abolitionists who attacked Garrison. To criticize "the mover of American Anti-Slavery" exhibited "bad taste" and "ingratitude." Specifically, Rogers pronounced the "Clerical Appeals" as "treacherous" and "cowardly"; those who sought to undermine the movement were "pro-slavery divines, and their cunning organs, the religious newspapers."²¹

If his views sent shock waves through the conservative abolitionist community there is no evidence to suggest that conservatives tried to block his appointment as editor of the Herald. Certainly they must have been aware of his positions, for he was continually denouncing clergymen and churches and in New Hampshire, clergymen were the most outspoken critics of "ultra" views. Yet, even while assuming an anti-clerical stance, Rogers was able to temper his position. He was "startled" at Garrison's criticism of the Sabbath and argued that no independent abolitionist could--or should--be a worshipper and idolizer of Garrison.²² In addition, he apparently said little about the "woman question" and his position on politics was muddled. On the one hand he had anonymously denounced political parties, arguing for their eventual extinction, but on the other hand he had not taken issue with the numerous resolutions passed at conventions which urged abolitionists to carry their principles to the polls.²³

If conservatives had any reservations about Rogers, they did not

publicize them. It is conceivable that they believed he was the best possible choice for the time-consuming job of editor. Whatever the case, Rogers began his editorial duties in June, 1838. By accepting the position, he abandoned a comfortable legal practice, took a staggering cut in pay, and, until his death in 1846, was forced to rely on donations from friends to help feed his family.

At the time of Rogers' appointment to the Herald, most abolitionists, following Kimball's lead, sought to avoid the growing controversy surrounding Garrison and his critics. To be sure, partisans could be counted on both sides in the state, but leaders took pains to avoid an open break similar to the one that was threatening the Massachusetts society in 1838 and 1839. Disgruntled Bay State abolitionists were beginning to call for a "new organization" that would be dedicated solely to anti-slavery principles and not to Garrison's "extraneous issues." Upset with the disturbances in Massachusetts and hoping to avoid similar internecine warfare in the Granite State, New Hampshire abolitionists assiduously courted neutrality and called for an end to the disputes. Resolutions passed at the Hillsborough County Anti-Slavery Society convention typified the feelings of most abolitionists in the state. First, members resolved that "we know of no leader, but principles, in the anti-slavery cause,-- . . . we hail every abolitionist as a brother"; Hillsborough County abolitionists then resolved that they "view[ed] with pain" the proposed "new organization" in Massachusetts, a "course entirely uncalled for."²⁴

If the Hillsborough County abolitionists and like-minded supporters throughout the state had hoped to maintain a neutral

position in the anti-slavery disputes raging in Massachusetts, they were to find that Rogers--now the most influential anti-slavery voice in the state--was rapidly being drawn more deeply into Garrison's orbit. In his first issue as editor, Rogers launched a full-scale attack on politics and anti-slavery political action. For him, voting was merely an exercise that decided "which of two rival Caesars, shall be captain-general . . . over this entire state."²⁵ Three months later he praised Garrison's newly formed Non-Resistance Society and denounced all military ventures. The military and even the state militias represented "human-tigerism - rational brutality - hatred dressed up in regiments . . . homicide under pay and murder per order." Those abolitionists, he announced, who did not raise the non-resistant standard would eventually die by the sword. He did, however, in the same article declare that although allied, anti-slavery and non-resistance were two distinct causes. He also announced that abolitionists "must argue" with those who held that women were inferior to men. In addition, he praised those abolitionists who stood "fearless of the Popery that tyrannizes over the soul of the country, and that hydra 'the brotherhood' [clergy]." Following Garrison's example, Rogers noted that not all abolitionists would agree with his position, but they were not expected to agree. All he desired was that abolitionists recognize the importance of freely discussing his principles "in fairness and honor."²⁶ Undoubtedly conservative New Hampshire abolitionists could reach only one conclusion after his proclamations: Nathaniel P. Rogers was an "ultra" Garrisonian non-resistant. Any neutral course would be difficult to seek when the editor of the Herald was an outspoken

defender of extraneous issues.

Although outspoken in his defense of Garrison, he nevertheless courted neutrality by couching his views in terms of "free discussion." Issues that divided abolitionists could at least be addressed in a civilized fashion in the pages of the Herald. Accordingly, he continually printed letters and editorials from other newspapers which argued against Garrison and, at the same time, reprinted articles from the Liberator devoted to non-resistance. Many were pleased with Rogers' editorial abilities and his sense of fair play. One abolitionist wrote that "The Herald is vastly improved under your partial care."²⁷ But with the growing divisions in Massachusetts, and with conservative New Hampshire abolitionists following the lead of their Bay State counterparts in urging a new organization, Rogers found himself adopting a more rigid stance in his support for Garrison. Indeed, after waging a frustrating war of words with conservative abolitionists and after attending a series of disruptive conventions from 1839 to 1840, Rogers became one of the most uncompromising "ultras" in the entire anti-slavery movement.

By January, 1839, conservative Massachusetts abolitionists had formulated a plan to separate Garrison's influence from the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society (MASS) by seeking to refuse to seat women and then trying to establish control over the Liberator. Anti-Garrison abolitionists in the Bay State also proposed a new weekly paper in Massachusetts "which shall take right, high, and consistent ground on the subject, and constantly urge abolitionists, as in duty bound, to use their political, as well as their moral and religious power and rights for the immediate overthrow of

slavery." But at the MASS annual meeting conservatives could not muster the needed votes on resolutions censuring Garrison's non-resistance and anti-political stance. When women delegates voted to defeat the anti-Garrison resolutions, conservatives objected to their participation, but Garrisonian Francis Jackson, presiding officer of the meeting, ruled that women could actively participate. In a final slap at conservatives, the convention accepted the annual report for the MASS--written by Garrison--which advocated women's rights, attacked political action, and praised non-resistance.²⁸

Soundly defeated in Massachusetts, the conservatives next sought to challenge Garrison at the annual AASS meeting in New York, where they were at least cheered by the fact that the Executive Committee of the AASS was just as intent upon dislodging Garrison. Aware of this "treachery," Garrison brought a sizeable contingent of his supporters--including women--to New York in May. Immediately, the question of women participation was broached and after a day of angry debates, a resolution was passed 180 to 140 allowing women to vote. Once again, the conservative challenge to Garrison's "ultra" views was defeated.

Several weeks later, conservatives made one final attempt to halt Garrison's influence. At the annual meeting of the New England Anti-Slavery Society conservatives attempted to unseat the women delegates, but they were soundly defeated. At last abandoning their crusade, they withdrew from the convention and formed the Massachusetts Abolition Society, a "new organization" which excluded women from full participation. In an attempt to counter the Liberator, the conservatives created the Massachusetts Abolitionist, a paper dedicated to

political action.²⁹ In the Bay State the threatened split had finally occurred.

Because the debates in Massachusetts in early 1839 were so intense, New Hampshire abolitionists were increasingly drawn into the fray. For his part, Rogers continued to defend Garrison, noting that he was "the originator of the enterprise . . . --the Columbus of this exploration for the new world of Liberty." To limit this "pioneer" was tantamount to "subjecting the compass to the regulation of the rash mariner." For Rogers, it was "preposterous," "suicidal," and "vulgarly ungrateful" to have another anti-slavery paper in Massachusetts while the Liberator and Garrison were there, especially one which was devoted to political action. Worse, the Liberator was not opposed to political action; Garrison never argued that voting was to be a badge of anti-slavery membership, as the "new organizationists" insisted.³⁰

Even with his defense of Garrison, Rogers appeared to be wavering, or at least attempting to dilute the Bostonian's radical doctrines, perhaps in part to forestall Garrison's critics in New Hampshire. Whatever the reason, Rogers' own positions seemed muddled and inconsistent to the new organizationists. He had applauded non-resistance, but then stated that Garrison's "non-resistance notions are a little stronger than we have been educated to."³¹ Likewise, while he approved of Garrison's anti-political stance he had also argued that petitioning Congress was acceptable.³² Rogers was an outspoken opponent of "clerical dominance" but was uncomfortable with Garrison's assault on the Sabbath. Where, new organizationists asked, did Rogers stand? Was he a supporter of Garrison or not?

As Rogers now attempted to explain his position, he had always been consistent because the issue was not Garrison's "ultra" principles but his right to hold such principles. Rogers or anyone else need not agree with these causes, but Garrison certainly had every right to publish them in his own paper. New organizationists, Rogers contended, were attempting to narrow the anti-slavery platform by insisting that all abolitionists agree on every issue before the public. This attitude would ultimately harm the cause and shrink membership.

Part of the confusion with Rogers' position rested largely on the fact that he was not entirely convinced that Garrison's world view was the proper one. Indeed, he was sympathetic to non-resistance, to women participation in anti-slavery conventions, and to an anti-political creed, but emotionally he was not yet able to commit himself totally and unconditionally to these causes, especially to non-resistance. Eventually Rogers would be firmly committed to non-resistance, but in early 1839, it appeared that he was undecided and confused. Those championing a new organization and a new, politically-oriented paper in Massachusetts recognized his wavering and sought, through logical arguments, to convert Rogers--a highly valued prize--to their cause. Henry B. Stanton, an articulate leader of the anti-Garrison forces in Massachusetts, wrote Rogers explaining their position. Recognizing that Rogers was upset both with attacks launched against Garrison and with the formation of a new paper, Stanton argued that political activists were the aggrieved party and not Garrison. The Bostonian was "arraying a faction of his paper against political action [which] injured and cramped us greatly."

Massachusetts abolitionists "don't like the isms, i.e., non-govt, perfection, etc"; indeed, the no-government theory was "pernicious" and threatened the movement in Massachusetts. There were, Stanton claimed, 15,000 "voting abolitionists" in the state, but no paper to reach them. The Abolitionist would serve that need. "Rely upon it, dear bro.," Stanton declared, "the cause in this state has outgrown its nursery clothes, and it is getting of age. What! One paper, with a circulation of 2,500, meet the cravings of Massachusetts abolitionism!" Countering Rogers' argument that Garrison was "essential to the cause," Stanton dryly pointed out that if for some reason Garrison left the cause, abolitionism would continue. No man was indispensable.³³

The Reverend Orange Scott echoed Stanton's position in a series of letters that Rogers eventually published in the Herald. Scott bluntly asked Rogers where he stood on the "isms." Scott had heard from "an able correspondent" that Rogers was leaning toward the "no-government" theory, but it was difficult to confirm since Rogers only defended Garrison and did not address the non-resistance cause directly in the pages of the Herald. Why was Rogers being so cautious? "Can it be that the fear that you would not come off so well as 'second best,' makes you so careful?" The implications of the no-government theory were immense, and it was time that Rogers understood them.

Scott argued that he could accept Garrison's attacks on the Sabbath and the clergy but the no-government theory was perilous since "it strikes at the very foundation of the anti-slavery enterprise." Without political action the slave would remain in

chains. Indeed, if Garrison followed his no-government theory to its logical conclusions, might he not eventually argue against anti-slavery organizations? In short, "This [non-resistant] scheme of consummate nonsense, coming from the source it does, is the darkest spot in our anti-slavery enterprise."³⁴

Rogers was quick to reply, although Scott probably was no more enlightened on his views than before he wrote his letter of inquiry. Rogers refused to address the non-resistance issue in the Herald because he had never directly advocated it in the paper nor did he consider it essential to the anti-slavery cause. Preoccupation with the doctrine was producing unnecessary strife among abolitionists and Rogers had no desire to contribute publicly to the debate:

Whether we hold to voting or not . . . whether we incline to believe the doctrine of non-resistance or not, we shan't tell brother Scott, in the Herald--and we don't think, if he should write an article for the Herald against non-resistance, or Mr. Garrison one in favor of it, that we should publish either of them unless they could satisfy us that the anti-slavery cause could be advanced by one side or the other of that question.

Rogers explained that perhaps one day he may "come to the conclusion that human violence is unlawful in any form," but if he did, he would not use the Herald to propagate these views. He assured Scott, however, that while a non-resistant had to be an abolitionist, an abolitionist need not be a non-resistant.³⁵

On balance it appeared that, indecisiveness aside, Rogers was a Garrisonian. In fact, only certain reservations concerning "no government" and the Sabbath prevented Rogers from fully supporting Garrison's position; furthermore, it was clear that the New Hampshire editor thought Garrison had been "cruelly" assailed by his enemies.³⁶

At the same time many conservatives in New Hampshire increased their attacks on Garrison, and openly supported the efforts of new organizationists in Massachusetts, as well as advocating a new society in New Hampshire. Indeed, the New Hampshire "new organizationists" were so visibly active in late 1839 that one Garrisonian angrily noted that the "snaky form of [the Massachusetts new organization] is already seen winding its way among the vallies of New Hampshire."³⁷

Anti-slavery ministers were especially critical of Garrison, and they could be counted as firm supporters of new organization. The Reverend Rufus Putnam of Chichester was so enraged with Garrison's rantings in the Liberator that he "dropt it" and he knew of "one or two others and ministers in this region who have done the same." He was "astonished" at Garrison's influence among abolitionists. Were abolitionists so blind that they could not see that "the cause itself is the main thing and the man comparatively of very little consequence"? Worse, Garrison had overstepped the bounds of anti-slavery agitation by advocating extraneous issues that would ultimately destroy abolitionism. The "'woman question'" would destroy the "foundations of human virtue and happiness"; the "no-government" issue would insure that "Might would make right. Depravity would reign." Putnam could take comfort in the fact that in New Hampshire "many of the most substantial abolitionists are strongly in favor of [the Massachusetts Abolition] Society." Unfortunately, many were still "ultra" and "go for Garrison," including the popular Rogers whose Herald "is not much a paper . . . we want."³⁸

The Reverend John LeBosquet, Congregational minister from Loudon, presented his case in several public letters written to Rogers. It was wrong, LeBosquet declared, to consider one man the "All in All" of the anti-slavery movement, even if that man pioneered the cause. Garrison, in his zeal to propagate principles that "do not touch the subject of slavery," was driving away potential converts to abolitionism; he "is known to hold and to practice upon principles which are believed by the great body of christians in the world, to be destructive of all order, and all religion."³⁹ LeBosquet later denounced Garrison at the May, NEASS convention for his stance on the issue of women participation.⁴⁰

While other anti-Garrisonians wrote to Rogers expressing their dismay with "extraneous issues," the most threatening--for Rogers--was the reaction of the Reverend Jonathan Curtis, President of the NHASS. After condemning Garrison, Curtis ominously wrote that if the state society should in any way lend support to Garrison, then there would be a new organization in New Hampshire.

Rogers was furious. The fact that Curtis was threatening to disband the very organization over which he presided seemed indefensible to Rogers. At last, he dropped all pretense of neutrality and openly chastised new organizationists for their "dogmatical and most unreasonable censures," and berated himself for not denouncing them earlier when the movement was taking shape in Massachusetts. In the past he had refused to comment directly on new organization "out of regard for the feelings of a few men like Mr. Curtis." A remorseful Rogers concluded that, as a result of his silence, the entire movement in New Hampshire was suffering

at the hands of the anti-Garrison faction.

Rogers angrily insisted that the NHASS platform was large enough to accompany individuals holding divergent opinions. If the only way to achieve "harmony" was to disband or secede from the NHASS, then Rogers retorted, it was a traitor's doctrine; the consequences of a new organization in New Hampshire would be disastrous and Curtis "would regret it to the day of his death." Once divided, the anti-slavery cause in the Granite State would ultimately perish and the crippled state society would resemble the shorn Sampson.⁴¹

Unimpressed with Rogers' attack, conservative abolitionists meeting in Cheshire county issued a series of resolutions condemning Garrison and applauding the efforts of new organizationists in both Massachusetts and New Hampshire. For Rogers, the doctrines enunciated by the "Cheshire Resolutions" were "unsound and untenable." Worse, for the first time new organizationists had moved beyond the pages of the Herald and were directly sowing the seeds of their cause among the body of anti-slavery men in New Hampshire. While Rogers did not want a division in the abolitionist ranks, he would not seek to convince conservatives to remain in the NHASS. Those who could not accept a broad anti-slavery platform were encouraged to leave the NHASS. But, he sarcastically noted, if the conservatives insisted on organizing, they should do so under the title of colonizationists, Liberians or any other such distinctions; they certainly did not deserve to be labelled "abolitionists."⁴²

By early 1840 it was apparent to most New Hampshire abolitionists that a showdown between the defenders and detractors of Garrison was unavoidable. Conservatives attacked Rogers for championing

"ultra" issues and for condemning the efforts of new organizationists. Many halted their subscriptions to the Herald because Rogers had chastised the clergy for endorsing the new organization.⁴³ In turn, Rogers increased his assaults on "new organization." Those advocating a separate society should merely retire from the movement altogether, "for they are not prepared to undergo its sacrifice." The divisions in the movement were caused not by Garrison, but by the new organizationists who, for example, directly introduced the woman question by seeking to exclude them from full anti-slavery participation. Worse, new organizationists in Massachusetts had infiltrated the ranks of New Hampshire abolitionists in an attempt to spread their pernicious doctrines. One such "disorganizer"--Alanson St. Clair of Massachusetts--had traveled "to the County of Cheshire--to whisper there in the ear of New Hampshire anti-slavery, (Like the tempter in the ear of Eve) of tasting of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil--of eating the apple of discord and new organization."⁴⁴ By April, 1840, Rogers was convinced that any abolitionist supporting new organization was "not suited to remain on the platform of old organization."⁴⁵ If the new organizationists in New Hampshire sought a fight with Rogers, they could expect one.

Many abolitionists rallied behind Rogers after he became the brunt of increased attacks by new organizationists. As might be expected, Garrison wrote that he was sympathizing with Rogers, "yet rejoicing to believe that, though you are called to pass through a fiery ordeal your gold will thereby be made brighter and purer."⁴⁶ Mary Clark, a pro-Garrison abolitionist from Concord, was saddened by the fact that "the A.S. war has at last been carried into the

heart of New Hampshire," but rejoiced that Rogers was "maintaining the ground Garrison-like." Urging Rogers on, she exclaimed: "God give [you] strength to war with the unhallowed spirit which is rising itself up against you among our hills and dells." In a letter to Rogers' wife, Clark applauded his "bold and unsparing rebukes" to new organizationists who were gaining in numbers "faster than he can put them down singly."⁴⁷

With the 1840 AASS convention, participants of the "anti-slavery war" in New Hampshire were afforded a glimpse of what unresolved differences could entail. Supporters and opponents of Garrison packed the New York meeting, determined that their side be victorious. Sixteen New Hampshire delegates attended, including Rogers and Curtis, now the acknowledged leader of new organization in New Hampshire. The test of strength came when conservatives asked for a vote on the woman question after Abby Kelly was appointed to the business committee. After the votes were tallied--557 for her appointment and 451 against--conservatives walked out of the convention and created the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society.⁴⁸ The national society, like the Massachusetts society, had been split. With the annual NHASS meeting only a month away, Granite State abolitionists braced themselves for the inevitable show-down.

Rogers was especially apprehensive about the impending meeting because he would not be able to attend, since he had been selected as a delegate to the World's Anti-Slavery Convention, which was to be held in London at the same time as the NHASS annual meeting. Realizing that new organizationists would attempt to purge him from his editorship, Rogers issued a call for all "true" abolitionists

to attend the meeting and hold high the banner of "old organization." If the Herald was taken from him, he would certainly abide by the decision of the convention; but he liked "the little sheet," and if he were allowed to remain as editor he would devote himself to the paper--and to the cause--with renewed vigor.⁴⁹

Soon after Rogers left New Hampshire, both sides sought to pack the convention with their supporters, not only from New Hampshire but from Massachusetts as well. Parker Pillsbury, temporary editor of the Herald, urged Massachusetts old organizationists to attend, for "we are on the eve of New Organization . . . [and] our ranks will be fearfully small."⁵⁰ For his part, the Reverend Jonathan Curtis issued a call for clerical and pro-new organizationists to attend in order to oust Rogers and all "ultra" elements from the society.⁵¹ Oliver Johnson, temporary editor of the Liberator--Garrison, too, was a delegate to the World's Convention--noted that all eyes were on New Hampshire. The struggle in the Granite State, he said, was between "the soul-enfranchising principles" of Rogers' and his supporters and "the craft and policy" of those clerical abolitionists who opposed him.⁵²

When the NHASS's annual meeting was called to order, both New Hampshire and Massachusetts abolitionists were in attendance. It was a tense gathering because neither side knew what the final outcome would produce. Old organizationists need not have feared, however, for they won the test of strength early in the meeting. The question of "female participation" was raised immediately after the opening prayer was given and the issue was hotly debated for an entire day. In the late afternoon the debate was brought to a

close and delegates were asked to vote. In a stunning upset for new organizationists, the NHASS voted 197 to 58 to allow women to participate fully in the proceedings.

When the meeting was called to order the next day, new organizationists introduced a resolution that declared that it was "the incumbent duty" for all abolitionists "to vote at the polls" and to actively participate in the political process. Old organizationists, realizing that the resolution was an attempt to engage the convention in a debate over non-resistance principles, sent it to the business committee where everyone acknowledged it would be buried for the duration of the annual meeting. In a final attempt to bring the old organizationists to bay, a resolution was introduced which called for the NHASS to sever its relations with the AASS and to align itself with the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. Refusing to vote on the "unconstitutional" resolution, the convention then instructed that all resolutions must pass through the business committee—a body dominated by old organizationists—before the entire body could vote on them. Realizing that this was a thinly disguised attempt to stifle new-organizationist resolutions, President Curtis resigned his chair, issued a blistering attack on female participation, and, with a number of supporters at his heels, walked out of the convention. Before the victorious old organizationists adjourned, they reappointed Rogers to the Herald, denounced the "pro-slavery" clergy, and invited all abolitionists, regardless of sex, to take part in the destruction of slavery.⁵³

Old organizationists were jubilant that they had saved the NHASS from falling into the hands of "disorganizers." Yet, their spirits

must have been dampened somewhat, for Curtis and his supporters soon formed the rival New Hampshire Abolitionist Society, an auxiliary to the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. Not only had Curtis "new organized" the state, but some of the most respected anti-slavery zealots numbered among his supporters, including practically every anti-slavery minister in New Hampshire.⁵⁴

Furthermore, the New Hampshire Abolition Society established the Abolition Standard, a paper that rivalled the financially pressed Herald.

Even with a rival organization established in the state, Rogers was nevertheless pleased that Curtis and his supporters had been prevented from transforming the NHASS into a pro-political and anti-woman body. Writing from Edinburg, Rogers congratulated Pillsbury and other old organizationists "on your glorious victory of the 3rd of June":

You have conquered, and the cause is safe. I have no fears for the cause since New Hampshire has gone right . . . You have unmasked 'new organization' and it has seceded. It is well it has, since it must be so. Let it set up a press now, and then we will have the pro-slavery of the North openly against us in the field.⁵⁵

In a letter to his wife, Rogers registered an unfeigned sense of relief: "I rejoiced and thanked God for the news of our glorious victory at Concord. In all my wanderings I find no such anti-Slavery as the Concord Anti-Slavery--no such abolitionists as our own faithful and sterling friends of New Hampshire. . . . How glorious they have sustained the Right."⁵⁶

Ever since assuming the editorial duties of the Herald in the summer of 1838, Rogers had been steadily leaning toward the

Garrison-dominated, radical wing of abolitionism. As has been illustrated, he had always held the clergy in low esteem, even prior to becoming editor; he had sympathized with non-resistance but did not accept all of its logical extensions; he instinctively disliked politics and he personally shunned political action, yet he urged abolitionists to petition Congress and even to vote if they so desired. There had always been some qualification, some minor misgiving, that prevented Rogers from embracing a firm, unconditional "ultra" stance. But sometime in 1840, he cast his reservations to the wind and became a staunch non-resistant, an outspoken foe of all political action, and a vitriolic opponent of "clerical dominance." Indeed, he would soon surpass even Garrison in assuming an unbending, "ultra" position.

It is difficult to ascertain precisely what prompted Rogers to abandon his reservations and adopt a more radical stance. His disgust with new organizationist activities at the national, regional and state anti-slavery conventions may have served to jolt him into a more ultra frame of mind. Perhaps he envisioned the factional dispute as a fight between good and evil, a battle in which there was no justification for compromise. Certainly Garrison had some influence on Rogers, for the two men were inseparable in the spring and summer of 1840. As delegates to the World's Convention in London they had crossed the ocean together, roomed together, and traveled throughout the British Isles together. Whatever the case, upon his return from London, Rogers was a vigorous non-resistant and his paper became one of the most radical anti-slavery organs in the nation.

Certainly the nature of the World's Convention contributed to Roger's radicalism. Rogers, Garrison, Lucretia Mott, and free black Charles Lenox Remond were selected as delegates by the 1840 AASS to attend the highly-touted London convention. Anticipating a productive meeting, the American (old organizationists) delegates discovered to their chagrin that women were not allowed to participate. In protest, Garrison, Rogers, and others refused to take their seats, settling instead for the observers' gallery.

Both Rogers and Garrison were furious. Rogers bitterly noted that if he had known that the convention would insist on excluding women, he would never have attended.⁵⁷ Garrison, in explaining their reasons for not taking part, asked: "Could we do no less--by our regard for consistency and justice, and as representatives of a Society which makes no distinctions among its members on account of complexion, condition or sex--than to refuse . . . to connect ourselves with such a body?"⁵⁸ In a letter to a major organizer of the Convention, Rogers sarcastically noted that the Convention was "a merely imaginary body . . . a fantasy of Anti-Slavery . . . a 'practical flourish' of an imaginative American version."⁵⁹ To his wife, he wrote that it was "a hoax"; a "paltry London committee at the head of a petty conference--and organized on such narrow principles that we would not join them and took our seats in the gallery."⁶⁰

In addition to the pressures caused by organizational rifts and the disappointments incurred at the World's Convention, Rogers was also experiencing a personal dilemma which, as friends informed him, affected the entire movement. Old organizationists throughout the

country were pressuring him to edit the New York-based National Anti-Slavery Standard, a new organ under the aegis of the AASS. Prior to the 1840 AASS convention, the anti-Garrison Executive Committee transferred the Emancipator, the official voice of the AASS, to the friendly New York City anti-slavery society in an attempt to prevent Garrisonians--should they be victorious at the annual meeting--from silencing the pro-political organ.⁶¹ After the schism and after the paper's "illegal" transfer, old organizationists discovered that they were without an official paper. The National Anti-Slavery Standard was introduced to fill the gap and abolitionists believed that only Rogers could make it an effective and widely-read organ.

His friends were unrelenting; he must edit it for the good of the cause. In a letter to his wife, Rogers wrote that "The abolitionists with one voice call us to come [to New York]," but Rogers was loath to leave New Hampshire; he could not bring himself to depart from "the grand old cause and the noble Concord friends," especially after they had sustained him as editor of the Herald.⁶²

He had tried to postpone the decision as long as possible, but the old organizationists were growing impatient. In a letter to Maria Weston Chapman, a panicky James C. Jackson, an abolitionist affiliated with the Standard, wrote that Rogers had not responded to official correspondence regarding the editorship. If ultimately he refused to edit the Standard, "It will partially paralyze if not quite kill us."⁶³ For her part, Chapman sought to pressure Rogers through his wife. "Let him go to New York," Chapman wrote Mrs. Rogers, "and man that print and support [for the cause] should come though it were our life blood. The battle is there now, and there

ought the warrior be. . . . I know what a sacrifice it will be to you both--but I dare not do otherwise than urge it." At least, Chapman pleaded, "say that Mr. Rogers had made up his mind to go for a year." Even George Thompson, writing from Liverpool, urged Rogers to edit the new paper; "I should like," he wrote, "to see Boston inside the headquarters of Old organization."⁶⁵

Clearly, Rogers had no desire to leave his beloved New Hampshire and relocate in the bustling city of New York. Moreover, New Hampshire abolitionists did not want to lose one of the most effective anti-slavery voices in the country.⁶⁶ At a special NHASS convention in September, New Hampshire abolitionists took to the floor urging Rogers to remain in the state where he was most needed. Pillsbury introduced a resolution that asserted it was "not expedient" for Rogers to leave, but Garrison, also in attendance, amended it by proclaiming that it was "the duty" of Rogers to go to New York. The convention finally resolved the issue by allowing Rogers "to act according to his own views of the right."⁶⁷

Rogers' decision was to remain in New Hampshire but to supply editorials and other articles to the Standard. In other words, he would be editor of the Standard, without leaving Concord. He could not leave the state, he said, because local abolitionists felt that New Hampshire was "the anti-slavery Thermopylae." He would follow the wishes of New Hampshire abolitionists and stay to do battle with all the pro-slavery elements in the state.⁶⁸

But if Rogers were to lead the battle against pro-slavery in New Hampshire he would be leading a much reduced contingent of followers. The "new organized" New Hampshire Abolition Society had

left the old organization with fewer people, and its Abolition Standard served to attract the less radical readers from the Herald.⁶⁹ Worse, many New Hampshire abolitionists began working for the newly-formed Liberty Party, which was making rapid inroads in the state. In the spring of 1841, the Liberty Party ran Daniel Hoit of Sandwich for Governor and soon after established the People's Advocate as the state's Liberty Party organ.⁷⁰ Rogers fought hard against the third party movement--as he did against all political action--because politics was devoid of principle. But Rogers' protestations against political action to the contrary, the New Hampshire Liberty Party dramatically increased its votes at every election.⁷¹ Rogers must have realized that if he were to convert the state to abolitionist principles, he had a powerful rival in the Liberty Party which, to his mind, was not interested in converting individuals to "pure" anti-slavery doctrines but solely dedicated to winning votes and capturing offices.

Not only was Rogers forced to contend with political abolitionists, but he was faced with numerous desertions within the old organization. By January, 1841, the Dover Female Anti-Slavery Society, an organization that had enthusiastically supported Rogers, could now boast of only four active members out of an original seventy-five or eighty. "Considerable dissatisfaction was expressed at the [radical] course of the Herald of Freedom," explained one of the few remaining members.⁷² This must have been a powerful blow for Rogers, in view of his outspoken defense of active participation by women in the cause.

In addition, the Reverend John Lewis, a black agent for the

old organization in the state, resigned in January, 1841, because he felt Rogers and his allies were imbued with an "improper spirit of contentiousness." Rogers was stunned. Lewis was ungrateful, "seeing what they [members of the old organization] have done and suffered to relieve his down-trodden people from degradation. It is very dishonorable to him as a colored man."⁷³

Finally, Rogers was faced with declining subscriptions to the Herald, "till it has got down so near the Gideon number." Many of those who had subscribed in the past were now attracted to the new organization, and the Herald was losing money rapidly. If Rogers were going to continue to combat pro-slavery, he was facing the prospect of doing so without his beloved Herald. Eventually the paper was rescued when donations poured in to the NHASS office, but throughout the 1840's, Rogers was faced with liquidation incessantly.⁷⁴

Clearly, Rogers was experiencing enormous problems in late 1840 and early 1841. Nevertheless, he was determined to combat the institution of slavery in the South and pro-slavery elements in New Hampshire, even if he had to challenge some of the most cherished institutions in America. Indeed, by expanding the meaning of "slavery," "pro-slavery," and even "freedom," Rogers propagated the most radical version of American anti-slavery, one that would eventually transcend even that of Garrison and his "Boston clique."

CHAPTER V

NOTES

¹ Aileen Kraditor, Means and Ends in American Abolitionism: Garrison and His Critics on Strategy and Tactics, 1834-1850 (New York: Random House, 1967), passim.

² Liberator, December 15, 1837.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Quoted in John Thomas, The Liberator: William Lloyd Garrison (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1963), p. 259. The Declaration further noted that the "history of mankind is crowded with evidences proving that physical coercion is not adapted to moral regeneration; that the sinful dispositions of men can be subdued only by love; that evil can be exterminated from the earth only by goodness." Thomas, p. 260.

⁵ Liberator, December 15, 1837.

⁶ Ibid., August 13, 1836. Of course, Garrison was not the only abolitionist to chastize the clergy. James Birney, for instance, claimed that churches were the "bulward of slavery." But Garrison's language seemed more "abusive."

⁷ Thomas, p. 224.

⁸ Kraditor, pp. 54-55.

⁹ Liberator, October 26, 1838. William Ladd, founder of the American Peace Society, rejected Garrison's non-resistance philosophy because he believed a case could be made for a defensive war. He also disagreed with Garrison's attitude toward women. "I do not think," Ladd wrote, "it comports with their interests, their dignity, or their duty, to raise their melodious but feeble voices, to the skill and harsh tones of debate in promiscuous assemblies. Woman was formed to persuade, rather than to command, and she cannot do both." Ibid., November 23, 1838

¹⁰ Ibid., March 18, 1837.

¹¹ Ibid., August 10, 1838.

¹² Ibid., August 31, 1838. See also Ibid., September 7, 1838.

¹³ Kraditor, pp. 159-60.

- 14 Liberator, September 15, 1837.
- 15 Ibid., June 2, 1837; June 8, 1838, Kraditor, pp. 49, 120.
- 16 Liberator, October 2, 1840; John Pierpont, ed. A Collection from the Newspaper Writings of Nathaniel P. Rogers (Concord, New Hampshire: J.R. French, 1847) passim.
- 17 Liberator, May 4, 1838.
- 18 Ibid., October 29, 1841.
- 19 Ibid., June 16, 1837.
- 20 Ibid., July 14, 1837; February 23, 1838.
- 21 Ibid., September 29, 1837.
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 See for instance, Ibid., March 14 and August 23, 1838.
- 24 Ibid., February 2, 1838.
- 25 Ibid., July 27, 1838.
- 26 Ibid., October 26, 1830.
- 27 John A. Richardson to N.P. Rogers, December 4, 1838, Rogers Collection, Haverford College Library.
- 28 Thomas, pp. 266-69.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 Liberator, February 8, 1839.
- 31 Ibid., April 19, 1839.
- 32 Ibid., April 26, 1839.
- 33 Henry B. Stanton to N.P. Rogers, February 9, 1839, Rogers Collection, Haverford College Library.
- 34 Liberator, April 19 and April 26, 1839.
- 35 Ibid., April 26, May 10, 1839.
- 36 New Organizationists were not alone in seeking Rogers' support. For his part, Garrison actively cultivated the support of his New Hampshire friend. Rogers had "an eagle vision," a "disarming spirit," and his sharp mind had "apprehended something of the truth in regard to the mournful divisions which now

exist . . . in Massachusetts." Garrison cast himself as a victim. His opponents "slander my character as a man and a Christian, by accusing me (as the ancient Pharisees did the Saviour) of not keeping the sabbath-day, of being opposed to the modern priesthood, who teach for hire and money etc., etc." William Lloyd Garrison to N.P. Rogers, May 21, 1839, Rogers Collection, Haverford College Library.

37 Parker Pillsbury to John Collins, November ?, 1839, ASC-BPL.

38 Rufus Putnam to A.A. Phelps, February 12, 1839; to Orange Scott and A.A. Phelps, April 27, 1839; to Alanson St. Clair and A.A. Phelps, September 28, 1839, all in the ASC-BPL.

39 Herald of Freedom, February 9, 1839; Liberator, June 14, 1839.

40 Liberator, June 14, 1839.

41 Ibid., November 15, 1839.

42 Ibid., November 8, 1839.

43 See for example January 3, 1840.

44 Liberator, January 3, 1840.

45 Ibid., May 8, 1840.

46 William Lloyd Garrison to N.P. Rogers, April 24, 1840, Rogers Collection, Haverford College Library.

47 Mary Clark to N.P. Rogers, ?, 1840 and January 28, 1840; to Mary Rogers, February 10, 1840; all in the Rogers Collection.

48 Liberator, May 22, 1840. See also Thomas, pp. 281-304.

49 Ibid., May 15, 1840.

50 Parker Pillsbury to John Collins, May 22, 1840, ASC-BPL.

51 Liberator, May 20, 1840.

52 Ibid.

53 Herald of Freedom, June 13, 1840; Liberator, June 12, June 26, 1840.

54 Christian Panoply (Concord, New Hampshire), June 12, 1840; Liberator, June 19, 1840; Emancipator, June 25, 1840.

55 N.P. Rogers to Parker Pillsbury, July 22, 1840, ASC-BPL. facsimile reprinted in Liberator, August 12, 1840.

⁵⁶ N.P. Rogers to Mary Rogers, July 11, 1840, Rogers Collection, Haverford College Library.

⁵⁷ Liberator, September 4, 1840.

⁵⁸ Ibid., July 24, 1840. See also Ibid., July 31, 1840, and August 14, 1840.

⁵⁹ N.P. Rogers to J.H. Tredgold, August 30, 1840, Rogers Collection, Haverford College Library.

⁶⁰ N.P. Rogers to Mary Rogers, July 11 and July 28, 1840, Rogers Collection, Haverford College Library.

⁶¹ See the Liberator, March 20, May 1, June 5, 1840; December 29, 1843; Emancipator, May 1, 1840.

⁶² N.P. Rogers to Mary Rogers, May 18 and July 28, 1840, Rogers Collection, Haverford College Library.

⁶³ James C. Jackson to Maria Weston Chapman, September 17, 1840, ASC-BPL.

⁶⁴ Maria Weston Chapman to Mary Rogers, September 14, 1840, Rogers Collection, Haverford College Library.

⁶⁵ George Thompson to N.P. Rogers, September 4, 1840, Rogers Collection, Haverford College Library.

⁶⁶ Yet, a small number of Granite State abolitionists thought Rogers would best serve the cause in New York. "[New Hampshire abolitionists] must concur. His labors may be needed in N.H., but they are more needed in New York. Let local interests and personal preference be sacrificed to the general good." (Exeter) Christian Herald and Journal, June 25, 1840.

⁶⁷ Liberator, September 18, 1840.

⁶⁸ Ibid., October 23, 1840. Rogers served as editor for about a year.

⁶⁹ Rogers estimated that the Herald lost 700 readers.

⁷⁰ Most abolitionist supporters of the Liberty Party had left the NHASS in 1840, but the New Hampshire Abolition Society did not actively work with the third party until 1843. Reinhard Johnson, "The Liberty Party in New Hampshire, 1840-1848," Historical New Hampshire XXXIII(Summer, 1978), p. 132.

⁷¹ In 1841, Hoit received 2.5% of the vote; in 1844 he received 11.8%.

⁷² Hannah Wilbur to N.P. Rogers, January 27, 1841. Rogers Collection, Haverford College Library.

⁷³ Liberator, January 10, 1841.

⁷⁴ Ibid., January 22, 1841.

CHAPTER VI

NATHANIEL P. ROGERS AND THE RISE OF RADICAL ABOLITIONISM

After the 1840 split in the abolitionist ranks, Nathaniel P. Rogers was firmly in control of the old organization in New Hampshire, and, as editor of the Herald of Freedom, he was instrumental in formulating a truly radical critique of American society. Under his tutelage--indeed, because of his tutelage--the old organization in New Hampshire emerged as the most radical state society in the nation, surpassing even the Garrison-dominated Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society.

By 1840, Rogers was an outspoken non-resistant and an earnest defender of women's rights. As such, he was a foe of all anti-slavery political action; indeed, he particularly abhorred the formation of a distinct, anti-slavery third party. It is no surprise, therefore, that until his death in 1846, Rogers was devoted to attacking the supporters of new organization and their anti-woman, anti-nonresistant, and pro-political stance. His attacks were not random, nor in his view was he espousing ideals that were "extraneous" to the cause of freeing the slave. Black slaves, women, and the population in general were all at the mercy of the State's elaborate political and social system which controlled people's destinies through the use of unrestrained power and force--a system that ruled and oppressed humans without mercy.

According to Rogers, this social and political system, based

on brute force and unrestrained power, had its foundation in the North. Slavery, the most outrageous form of coercion, was therefore more of a northern problem than a southern one. Hence, when most abolitionists became enraged after the anti-slavery Reverend Charles Torrey had been arrested at a slaveholders' convention in Maryland, Rogers registered little concern. Torrey was misguided for propagating the anti-slavery creed in the South, he reported evenly, for "what had the South to do with Slavery?"¹ Clearly, in Rogers' view, by the mid-nineteenth century the South had little to do with the institution. Railing against the South and the slaveholders did little to free the slave; the institution was so reputable and ingrained in that section, "because it is respectable and lawfully honorable" in the North. The North had often stood in judgment over the South's peculiar institution and had found in favor of it. "Now, if we want to reverse this judgment," Rogers explained, "we must effect it at the North, where it was passed and recorded. There is no sense in going to the South, and if we were there, we should have to go to the North."²

But who--or what--in the North was responsible for the evil? For Rogers, the answer was clear: "pro-slavery" elements in the North gave black bondage its legitimacy. Slavery could be eliminated "by destroying pro-slavery, which is its . . . staff of life." The most wicked pro-slavery element in the North--the one most responsible for bolstering slavery and inculcating a pro-slavery spirit among the people--was the clergy who manned the pulpits and lorded over their congregations. Countless times, he noted, anti-slavery zealots had pleaded with the clergy to preach abolitionist doctrines, but

they continually ruled in favor of the southern system. The church and clergy were important for Rogers because they set the moral tone for most communities. Because, by his standards, churches were pro-slavery, it followed that the community at large was pro-slavery as well. If Birney were correct in stating that the churches were the bulwarks of slavery--and Rogers had no reason to quarrel with this assessment--then to end slavery at its very foundation meant that abolitionists needed to turn upon them.³ Throughout the 1840's, therefore, Rogers attacked the churches and the larger northern society of which they were a part.

The justification for Rogers' anti-clerical position was no doubt based in part upon his experiences in 1839 and 1840. For him, anti-slavery unity was disrupted by the clergy who favored third-party politics and the exclusion of women from making a significant contribution to the cause. They were responsible for the debacle in 1840, both at the national level and in New Hampshire as well. The clergy withdrew from the AASS and the NHASS; not the converse. This alone was despicable, for their action destroyed a united anti-slavery front. But even worse, Rogers could not escape the fact that they were an essential cog in the dynamics of slavery. The clergy, while subduing "the people," bolstered the State and, in turn, the State protected slavery with its military might. In circular fashion, the State likewise protected the churches and clergy from abolitionist assaults. The power of the clergy was therefore an awesome, albeit surmountable, obstacle to conquer.⁴

Rogers recognized the fact that power led to control, and that clergymen wielded an inordinate amount of power over their

communicants. The clergy, he said, were "necessary" only in the sense that "they keep the people subordinate, and orderly members of political society. The State cannot exist in any form without the clergy." In this manner, the clergy controlled the people while the State went about its business. The clergy were necessary "to keep the people in order, while they refuse submission to Christ, and undertake to carry on this world's policy." In order to control people for the State, the clergy had to "keep the people in awe of their rulers, by the terrors of eternal damnation . . . if they do not submit." With this protective edifice constructed by the clergy, the State in turn constructed its own agencies of control--the court house, the state house, the prison, and even the government itself. These agencies of control were "as absolutely necessary as the cart whip, overseers, and other subduing influences on the plantation, to keep down the slaves."⁵ In effect, said Rogers, we are all slaves--slaves to the clergy and, by their association, slaves to the State. There was more to "slavery" than black southerners picking cotton under the watchful eye of a cruel overseer. The very pro-slavery institutions that upheld southern bondage had also imprisoned the American people in general.

In this context, then, the advancement of such causes as women's rights, non-resistance, and the denial of politics all had a central position in the anti-slavery enterprise, regardless of the charge by some that these were "extraneous subjects." Rogers acknowledged that upon first glance these issues probably seemed disparate and even separate from black slavery in the South. But they all had one common, unifying link: the unrestrained power of pro-slavery

elements. Slaveholding was absolute power. In the realm of government and politics, Rogers admitted, "power is regulated and reduced to what is called Law":

But is it not absolute and compulsory power [nevertheless]? And what is the difference between the two [i.e., power of the slaveholder and power of the State]? . . . In this country Civil government is in the hands of about 2,400,000 voters. Do not these hold the lives, liberties and property of the other millions of our census, as completely at their control and mercy, as the plantation tyrant holds his cowering slave?⁶

Indeed, could not these same voters transform women, children, and the disenfranchised in general into chattel slaves if they so desired? "That they won't be likely to," Rogers warned, "is no denial of their power to do it." Likewise, Rogers acknowledged that slavery and "female citizenship" were inexorably linked, for "is not woman in reality a slave politically, and socially, and oftentimes in treatment as well as in theory?" Rogers did not propose to abolish the unequal status of women or dissolve civil power per se, as was charged by his enemies. Rather, he sought "to overthrow that peculiar species of Rule, known and called by the name of SLAVERY."⁷ Slavery existed throughout society in different forms. Rogers' sole purpose was to eradicate the concept of slavery in all of its manifestations in American life. This meant freeing not only southern blacks but women and the general society as well.

How did Rogers propose to end slavery? Specifics were seldom addressed by Rogers, but it is clear that his "strategy"--loosely called--was an affirmation of his non-resistance principles. Abolitionists would be victorious only "by morally enforcing the incompatibility of the slaveholding power with the rights of

humanity and the laws of God." How this was to be translated into concrete action is unclear. But Rogers was adamant on what it did not include: slavery could not be ended by the use of state force or by politics. A third party, by operating within the corrupt framework of government and politics, merely compromised the principles set forth by the founders of the AASS in 1833 and, in addition, became a part of the very structure anti-slavery found despicable. If political abolitionists gained control of the government, Rogers insisted, they would use force to end slavery. Therefore, Rogers denied "that anti-slavery, as such, can vote, or accept political office." Rogers did concede that the Declaration of Principles of 1833 mentioned the duty to vote. But he explained, somewhat weakly, that such a tactic was a "universal mistake of the times, viz., that politics was not military." Viewing the document as a whole, however, it was obvious to Rogers that it was based upon the sound doctrine of non-resistance. Any deviation from these founding principles was pro-slavery.⁸

While Rogers believed that the proponents of a third party were small and ludicrous, he also recognized that they were nevertheless a force to be dealt with because their most vocal supporters and followers were clergymen. The clergy supported party politics because they would "divert attention wholly and permanently from their own wicked position" of controlling the people and bolstering the State. Therefore, the attack on the clergy was essential for the anti-slavery enterprise. Because the pro-slavery clergy threatened and controlled their communicants, slavery could not be destroyed "by a clergy-ridden people." The abolition of slavery

would "require a greater amount of moral principle and moral character than any people can attain to who are ridden by a clergy."⁹

Similarly, anti-slavery meant more for Rogers than merely denouncing slavery as a sin. To be anti-slavery, one had to acknowledge the full equality of "the human family." Those who did not believe in this doctrine were pro-slavery. Since the concept was denied and even violated, it was incumbent upon abolitionists to "morally annoy all those who in any way" violated it. For Rogers, this meant a full scale attack on the northern clergy since they were responsible for third party politics and the subjection of women. The political effort simply did not generate agitation, but quiescence; it "generates a superficial and fictitious animation . . . it tends to apathy and torpidity." Yet, apathy was precisely what the clergy sought because they could not control moral agitation. They were for political action precisely because they could control it.¹⁰

The attack upon the clergy was also necessary because the people of New England had to be free before they could liberate blacks. A prisoner cannot free another prisoner. Therefore, abolitionists were compelled to unmask "the falsehood of the claims of the clergy to Christian origin." These attacks—or "moral annoyances"—"are anti-slavery to the most utmost intent. They are the anti-slavery means and measures." Indeed, for Rogers, "Spiritual freedom must be enkindled among the people and their deliverance from Clergy and Sect, or they cannot afford liberty to the colored man." Non-resistance, women's rights, and the immorality of politics were "the high claim to anti-slavery character."¹¹

Here, then, was Roger's doctrine. Slavery was a northern issue because the North, controlled by the swollen power of the clergy, bolstered the power and authority of the State, which in turn, upheld the institution in the South. Since slavery could be broadly defined to include women, or to include all humans enslaved by the military might of the State, and since the clergy deserted these issues when they withdrew from the original anti-slavery organizations, then the abolitionist weaponry had to be aimed toward them and all that they held dear. Only a free northern population could free the enslaved blacks of the South. The abolitionist enterprise, therefore, could only succeed when the clergy were tamed and subdued, and when the so-called "free" northern population was truly liberated.

If the churches were the bastions of unbridled, pro-slavery power, then it followed that those who chose to eliminate the evil first had to "come-out" of the "synagogues," just as they had come-out of politics. Rogers' disgust with his own Congregational church in Plymouth forced him sometime in 1840 to leave the congregation and to establish regular Sunday meetings of a non-sectarian nature. This act alone horrified the majority of his fellow-townspeople and, as a result, he became the target of pointed criticism, which he absorbed with characteristic good humor. "Poor People [of Plymouth]," he wrote, "I am 'disturber of their tranquility.' I wonder they tolerate me as well as they do."¹² The meetings consisted of thirty to forty "seceders from the Steeple Houses"¹³

who "endeavor . . . to speak freely."¹⁴ This had so infuriated the townspeople--and the clergy--that they were led to rave that the come-outers were "breaking up society and destroying the ministry of the churches." Their response was to be expected, for as Rogers gleefully exaggerated, "abolitionists are everywhere dissolving their connection with their clergy and denominations. . . ."¹⁵

The come-outer meetings, which continued at least until 1843, were held in an upstairs apartment occupied by a portrait painter in the mornings and musicians in the evenings. Rogers admitted sarcastically that it did resemble a church in that "the little apartment has a pulpit in it, erected not for clerical performances --but a Kindred craft--the master magicians of the Free Masonry."¹⁶

Early in 1841, however, the body of the Plymouth Congregational Church apparently was not altogether certain of Rogers' intentions. Had he withdrawn from fellowship or not? When asked about his status Rogers, incredulous that they were unable to comprehend his actions, wrote the members. The church was in league with "the abomination" of slavery, he wrote. As long as the church continued its communion with slavery, then Christianity itself had been compromised; as long as the slave owner was welcome into the Plymouth Congregational church, then "you stand in this connection with his iniquity." Specifically, the church had debased itself when it rejected a resolution introduced by Rogers and others demanding a break with all pro-slavery forces in the country. He reminded the congregation that in the late 1830's the church had passed a resolution condemning slavery as a sin and demanding its immediate overthrow. But nothing had been done to effect such an action, and worse, the church recently

had hired a clergyman who was an outspoken opponent of the anti-slavery cause.

In closing, Rogers urged the Plymouth Congregational church to renounce its guilt. To do this the church must immediately denounce fellowship with all slaveholding churches, ministers, and professions. Also, the church must no longer sustain a minister who refused to work for the slave. Because these recommendations had not been met in the past, Rogers was obliged "to withdraw, and hereby do withdraw and withhold [sic] from you, as a body, (excepting of course my anti-slavery brethren and sisters), all christian communication and fellowship." In a final plea, Rogers invited all others to follow his course "if they would clear their skirts of the slave's blood."¹⁷

It is not known if the congregation formally excommunicated Rogers after the church received his letter, a practice that would be applied toward errant, radical New Hampshire abolitionists throughout the 1840's.¹⁸ They most likely did, but whatever the case, the point is moot, for Rogers had excommunicated the Plymouth Congregational church. He had condemned the congregation; he had left voluntarily. Moreover, he accomplished it with some sense of personal liberation, for as he wrote Francis Jackson: "I feel quite light since my unchurching [and] I am astonished when I look at the unfounded, unscriptural pretensions of our church and clergy."¹⁹ Only from beyond the walls of the tainted church could he experience the glories of pure Christianity, for Rogers was convinced that the teachings of Christ could not have been committed "to such a keeping as the clergy's." Once liberated from his own church, he could

gaze unshackled upon his own town and ruefully predict to Garrison:
" . . . my poor old church cooperation at Plymouth. We shall have
to beat them all down I think before anti-slavery can have place."²⁰

Rogers' liberation from the church was met with joy from fellow
come-outers and radical abolitionists in general. Garrison approved
wholeheartedly, for he had not "fellowshipped" in years. John
Pierpont, a close friend of Rogers, sent him a congratulatory letter
praising his excommunication, noting that the clergy, by excommuni-
cating radical abolitionists, merely exalted them.²¹ While Rogers
did not feel "dishonored" by his excommunication, the people of
Plymouth did not follow his lead, which moved Rogers to complain
two years later that his "poor little native region is eaten up with
priestcraft and proslavery." Plymouth was firmly in the hands of
the clergy, for its citizens "eye me with fear and avoid me [and]
. . . few . . . dare acknowledge me now."²³

After Rogers' encounter with the Plymouth church, other radical
abolitionists either came-out or were excommunicated from their
congregations. The pages of the Herald of Freedom--now with a
circulation of about 1200--were filled with such actions throughout
the early 1840's. It is impossible to determine the numbers
involved, but by 1844 all the acknowledged leaders and prime-movers
of the old organization in New Hampshire had either been excommunicated
or had voluntarily come-out of their respective churches, or, as
they were fond of saying, they had excommunicated the churches
from the kingdom of God. While the following chapter will deal
at length with the practice, suffice it to say that the radicals
viewed excommunication as additional proof that the clergy preferred

exalting the sinful slaveholder to heeding the warnings of the radical abolitionists.

One month after Rogers left the church he escalated his attack on the northern clergy. In a letter to the 1841 Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society Convention, Rogers informed his fellow-New Englanders that the radical, old organization in New Hampshire was engaged in a "terrible conflict" with the churches and clergy.

"We are fighting in the broad aisles of the meeting-house and in reach of the pulpit," he reported. The enemies of the anti-slavery cause in the Granite State--as elsewhere--were clergymen, "the legitimate descendants of those who issued from the monasteries and priories." Churches, at the behest of the clergy, were viciously excommunicating abolitionists and condemning women. Rogers issued a plea to his Massachusetts audience to come-out of these bastions of pro-slavery as he and many other New Hampshire abolitionists had done. "The church is the stronghold of slavery," he reasoned.

"Abolitionists have protected it there by fellowshipping the pro-slavery church. Let us withdraw that protection, and the monster will get but scanty shelter from the State."²³

Rogers' insistence that the churches were the stronghold of slavery seems odd in light of the fact that numerous anti-slavery resolutions were passed by the state's many churches in the 1840's. In fact, most religious associations at the county and state level urged the passage of even more stringent anti-slavery resolutions than those that were being passed. Moreover, most religious organs within the state were openly acknowledging the fact that churches were not in the forefront of the cause and exhorted them to end their

association with pro-slavery elements throughout the country. Rogers' belief that all churches were pro-slavery probably failed to move most communicants because those who were members of congregations that had condemned the evil could claim that at least they had taken a stand against the peculiar institution. How could Rogers denounce churches and other religious agencies when so many were attacking slavery? In this light, many ardent church-goers perhaps viewed Rogers' pronouncements as the result of a fevered imagination. Indeed, some communicants, disturbed by his blanket condemnation of all religious bodies, openly chastised Rogers for ignoring the facts.

To be sure, there was some justification for their opinion of Rogers. Even the nationally circulated, new organizationist, pro-political Emancipator took a dim view of clergymen who did not embrace the abolitionist cause. Ministers of this stripe "must get out of the way of the anti-slavery car or not complain, if it should ride over them," it retorted.²⁴ But even closer to home, the new organizationist Cheshire County Abolition Society went so far as to say that it would focus on the "duty of the churches in relation to slavery" at its forthcoming meeting in Jaffrey.²⁵

Furthermore, the evidence suggest that religious organizations took their mission seriously. Among the various county, state, and regional gatherings of individual denominations, anti-slavery resolutions were written in a forceful, uncompromising manner. At the New England Congregational Anti-Slavery Society--an organization that attracted most of the Congregational ministers in the southern portion of New Hampshire--resolutions were swiftly passed urging the Congregational churches to take a firm stand against

slavery and racial prejudice. Not only was the "Negro pew" viciously assaulted, but the delegates also announced to their brethren that prejudice against blacks called for "uncompromising and earnest rebuke" from all Christians. In addition, they recommended that no governing board member of a Congregationalist-sponsored benevolent society should contain a slaveholder or even a person remotely sympathetic to slavery.²⁶

The Congregationalists were not alone. In 1844, members of the New Hampshire Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church voted overwhelmingly--albeit meekly--"to allow the slaveholding Methodists to withdraw" from the national body.²⁷ Leading New Hampshire Methodists had long been sympathetic to the anti-slavery cause, ranging as far back as 1835 when the state conference had denounced slavery in a most uncompromising way.²⁸ In similar fashion, the Freewill Baptists, a denomination that had earlier announced its opposition to slavery, boldly reiterated its stance in the 1840's. For instance, at the Weare, New Hampshire, Quarterly Meeting in 1842, the Freewillers not only reaffirmed their opposition to slavery, but they also condemned apologists of the institution as well. In addition, they insisted that every Christian, especially every minister, "must bear faithful testimony against this most heinous sin," and that the churches must purify themselves from all associations with slavery.²⁹ The New Hampshire Baptist Association, meeting at Meredith Bridge, adopted a report submitted by one of its churches which resolved that no Baptist church within the association could hold fellowship with the Southern Baptist churches "which persist in the sin of holding human beings as

property," nor could it dismiss members to the southern churches.³⁰ Similarly, a non-denominational Conference of Churches, meeting in the northern-most region of the state, approved a memorial presented by the Freewill Baptist General Conference which denounced slavery as a sin and urged ministers of all faiths to do everything possible to eliminate it.³¹

The attack on slavery was not confined to state or regional ecclesiastical bodies. By the 1840's individual churches in New Hampshire were becoming increasingly outspoken when dealing with the issue, Rogers' assertions to the contrary notwithstanding. Moreover, those churches that passed anti-slavery resolutions were located in towns where secular anti-slavery did not exist in the early 1830's, evidence that the cause was attracting converts every year. Hence, the Congregational churches in Harrisville and Dublin both lashed out against slavery, announcing that they would never have fellowship with either a southern man-stealer or his apologist.³² Baptist churches in New London, Cornish, and Grafton passed similar resolves. The resolutions of the Cornish Baptist church were representative of the impatient tone most congregations exhibited when striking an anti-slavery stance. The Cornish Baptists affirmed that slavery was a sin, but acknowledged that paradoxically it was supported by the Christian churches. This was unacceptable behavior because it was the moral duty of all Christians to renounce this evil publicly. Therefore, the Baptists of Cornish withdrew fellowship from all churches and individuals who held slaves or who defended the practice. These sinners would be excluded from "our pulpit, our communion, and [our] membership." Furthermore, they decreed

that to receive a member from a slaveholding church without any forthcoming renunciation of the sin would "be totally inconsistent with gospel principles and purity." To underscore their commitment, the Cornish Baptists claimed that it was "highly criminal" for Christians to be silent on the subject of slavery and that, as a body, they would do all they could to end slavery and to elevate the free black.³³

Clearly, many New Hampshire religious bodies were taking an aggressive stand against slavery in the 1840's, often to the point that they were criticizing churches of their own denomination for not following their lead, a position they had been reluctant to take in the 1830's. It is understandable that many dismissed Rogers' criticism of their bodies since he seemed to be ignoring reality. But Rogers' condemnation of the church and clergy went beyond mere anti-slavery resolutions. For him, denouncing slavery as a sin was mere verbiage if not a bit old-fashioned. The problem was not the public stance of a church, but the relation of the church and its clergy to the State--a concept most communicants did not or could not comprehend.³⁴

Rogers was especially infuriated with the churches' hypocrisy, or worse, their selective morality. Denouncing slavery was meaningless without any corresponding action to back up their words--what Rogers called "faith with works." These "works" were not forthcoming, especially in New Hampshire. Countless times churches had closed their doors to anti-slavery meetings but remained open for "nonsensical dramatical performances," school exhibitions, science lectures, criminal trials, and "hard-cider hurrahs." In addition, while

churches could denounce prejudice, no constructive effort was made to eliminate the "Negro pews" or even the segregated section in the church graveyard.³⁵

For Rogers, their insincerity was illustrated further when churches, professing to be anti-slavery in temperament, chose to excommunicate radical abolitionists. To combat this behavior, Rogers helped pass numerous resolutions at anti-slavery meetings "exposing" the hypocrisy of the churches. Moreover, so-called anti-slavery churches viewed bondage only in terms of southern blacks; but, as Rogers frequently had observed, the concept of slavery involved more. In Bradford, New Hampshire, for instance, the minister of a supposedly anti-slavery Congregational church had refused to allow women members to vote on a temperance resolution. What additional proof did the people need that the clergy--regardless of their anti-slavery stance--was an "ungodly profession"? Are the congregations "so wedded to their idols that they will tolerate their priesthood, even after they see their cloven foot, and get convinced they are of the Devil."³⁷ Faith without works was, for Rogers at any rate, a mere shell. By themselves anti-slavery resolutions meant little.

In his denunciations of churches and clergy, Rogers and his followers made no distinction between the various denominations. Because all denominations refused to engage in thorough anti-slavery action (that is, action based upon Rogers' non-resistant formulations) then they were not Christian because Christ was thoroughly opposed to slavery. All denominations were corrupt and, for Rogers, only minor, artificial distinctions separated them.

In an attempt to enlighten New Englanders, he and his New Hampshire supporters used every opportunity to affirm this "fact." At one anti-slavery meeting, for instance, Parker Pillsbury declared that:

the popular religion of this country sustains slavery; and whoever in this day of mid-noon light sustains or fellowships that religion in the Baptist, Freewill Baptist, Congregational, Methodist, Universalist, Quaker, or any other of the leading sects of the times, is³⁸ a slaveholder, and has no claim to the name of Christian.

Rogers was more blunt. All the denominations that existed in New Hampshire "are excrescences on the face of the human family . . . They are fungus, [and] they must perish if the family is to live." Clergymen, regardless of their denomination, were "overseers" of the church who delighted in excommunicating anti-slavery radicals.³⁹

Rogers spared little ink when harshly denouncing specific denominations. He informed his readers that he disliked both the (New Hampshire) Congregational Journal and its editor, the Reverend Henry Wood. The paper was "a vile sheet," and it clearly won honors "as the worst in the State--altogether--and I think it belongs to about the worst denomination among us."⁴⁰ The Baptists were nearly as bad. At one time they were persecuted in New England, but as the years went by they had "grown big and pompous."⁴¹ Methodists had been hunted and mobbed in the streets, but by the 1840's they were "the most impudent sect of the whole brotherhood. They abound in Doctors and Seminaries, and their impudent eyes stand out with fatness."⁴²

Even the Freewill Baptists, a denomination that had abolitionist pretensions, were fast becoming indistinguishable from the others.

The very fact that they had been complimented for their religious ardor by the New Hampshire Congregationalists was a sure sign of corruption, Rogers sarcastically noted.⁴³ While the Freewillers insisted that they were an exception to the general character of denominations, Rogers nevertheless found them to be "as spiritually despotic as any of the others." Soon, he declared, the Freewill Baptists would have "their Theological Seminaries--their learned and ambitious clergy, and their haughty Doctors." It would be only a matter of time before they would "tread their poor and their women under foot, as the more respectable Sects now do."⁴⁴

Rogers' condemnation of individual denominations was not limited to those that attracted the most communicants in New Hampshire. On one occasion he was chastised by the Catholic Boston Pilot for his denunciation of the Roman church. Rogers responded by explaining that Catholicism and Protestantism were both corrupt and evil:

They are both akin to 'witchcraft,' only Rome is more open and consistent in its infernal claims. Rome claims supremacy over the State. Puritanism basely cowers down behind the State's guns, and utters its gibberish under protection of the army and navy. . . .⁴⁵

Rogers' disgust with all religious bodies even led him to denounce the Quakers (see Chapter VII) as well as the Millerites, a group that proclaimed Christ's imminent second coming and, more dangerously, a group that was winning converts among abolitionists in the mountain towns of Groton, Hebron, and Dorchester.⁴⁶

In addition to attacking the various denominations, Rogers and his followers also attacked the clergy as an aristocratic order. Like any other upper class, the clergy loved to be worshipped. As a "branch of the Aristocracy" clergymen were maintained by the "labor

of the poor, who are in many instances destitute" and whom the clerical aristocracy despises. If these people would leave the churches out of disgust with the pro-slavery stance of the clergy, then the aristocracy--the clergy--would be toppled. Cognizant of this possibility, the clergy, bent on preserving their status, moved "their corporations" to pass mild, innocuous anti-slavery resolutions in an attempt to prevent nascent abolitionists from escaping the clutches of clerical control.⁴⁷

In addition, the clergy loved conspicuous display. A Concord abolitionist noted that these "selfish priests grasping for power" pretended to shun worldly goods, opting instead for devotion to the population at large. Nothing was further from the truth, he said, for like any aristocracy, the clergy occupied the finest houses and "feast every day sumptuously on the fat of the land" while others suffered.⁴⁸

Henry C. Wright, an abolitionist and non-resistant organizer dispatched to New Hampshire, proclaimed that "as an order the Clergy had done more to sustain slavery, with all its pollutions than any or all classes." The typical clergyman--"one who is educated, trained, licensed, consecrated, and ordained"--Christianized "what the State sees fit to legalize"; they "throw the sanctions of CHRISTIANITY around whatever wrong or injustice the STATE makes lawful." Echoing Rogers, Wright observed that the State and clergy were the two most powerful forces in the country, each striving to serve the other. The clergy kept women in their "appropriate sphere, i.e., in the kitchen, in the nursery, in the house, at home." The clergy upheld the institution of marriage, but slavery did not recognize it. As an

order concerned with the moral purity of the entire world, the clergy hypocritically denounced "the Turkish harems" and the "Brothels of France," but, closer to home, slavery "legalizes adultery." Ministers, however, remained unmoved whenever this evil was brought to their attention. While lecturing in New Hampshire, Wright's anti-clerical theme could be summarized in one angry salvo: "Why have the clergy baptized, licensed, ordained, and consecrated theft, robbery, adultery, concubinage, whoredom, piracy, and murder? These abominations are legalized by the State." Because the Constitution upheld the right to own slaves, and because the State "declares Satan to be an angel of light," the clergy docily accepted it and even revelled in the pronouncements.⁴⁹

Rogers and his fellow radicals also attacked revivals because, they proclaimed, such activity was promoted by the clergy to divert attention from the cause of anti-slavery and to raise their power to even greater heights. In a resolution passed at an anti-slavery convention at Amherst, New Hampshire, the radicals declared that revivals were "priestly expedients to increase and perpetuate clerical despotism."⁵⁰ Writing from Hopkinton, Henry C. Wright noted that the clergy in the area did not wish to discuss anti-slavery or non-resistance because they were on the eve of a revival and did not want to divert the people from it. For Wright, this was hypocrisy of the worst sort because those who would participate in revivals anywhere in the United States were undoubtedly thieves, man-stealers, and defenders of man-stealers.⁵¹

Because his stinging denunciation of the clergy was so pronounced, and because he was creating such a sensation within the state, Rogers

soon earned a reputation as being one of the most radical abolitionists in the nation. Moreover, because of the eventual disruptive nature of his disciples and followers, New Hampshire enjoyed the reputation as a major outpost of American radical abolitionism. Even Garrison, while supporting Rogers in the main, found it necessary to temper some of the radical New Hampshireman's statements and actions.⁵² Other abolitionists not as patient as Garrison found Rogers' abusive language disconcerting, especially when he castigated the clergy. Old organizationist Charlotte Weston, for instance, felt Rogers should stop railing against the clergy, since he went beyond the bounds of propriety.⁵³

While his critics were occasionally shrill, the majority were even-tempered, appealing to Rogers' logic, sense of fair play and--if it were possible by 1842--to his moderation. A typical appeal was the Reverend R.S. Rust's lengthy correspondence with Rogers. Rust argued that, contrary to Rogers' claims, there were many anti-slavery clergymen in New Hampshire and throughout New England. As a man of God, Rust claimed he did not enjoy fellowshiping with slaveholders or their apologists and admitted that the churches were riddled with hypocrisy. Nevertheless, this was "no reason why we should denounce and brand as recreants and hypocrites the whole church and ministry." The duty of the Christian was not to come-out of the churches and then castigate them; rather, the duty of the Christian was to remain and chase the sinners from the houses of God. Rust claimed that churches could be used as a powerful agent of propaganda, since they served as "a sort of fulcrum upon which we may place the lever of truth, and make sad havoc with the system of slavery." Rust also

claimed--as most clergymen and new organizationists claimed--that Rogers and his adherents insisted on leaving the "original plan" of ending slavery and had "gone off . . . on a wild goose chase, in pursuit of women's rights, fighting for non-resistance, and against the clergy." Rust and his fellow anti-slavery clergymen wanted the woman issue and non-resistance untouched, advising Rogers to use the appropriate channels to propagate these causes.⁵⁴

Rogers' response was that if Rust shunned slaveholders and their apologists as he said he did, then he shunned "the whole American clergy and church" because both had recognized their southern brethren. As for Rogers' being on a "wild goose chase" in pursuit of women's rights, he caustically noted that in American society a woman

is reckoned no higher than a goose. An assertion of her humanity, on the anti-slavery platform, against the insolence of a Turkish Clergy, who would tread her underfoot and doom her to their own Reverend Harems, if they had the power--he and his clerical brethren universally scout as a 'wild goose chase.'⁵⁵

While Rogers was leading the assault on the churches and clergy within the columns of the Herald of Freedom, other radical New Hampshire abolitionists, greatly influenced by his writings, actually stormed the churches with their anti-slavery message and were either physically ejected or placed in jail cells. So disruptive were their tactics, so infamous were their methods, that Stephen Foster, Parker Pillsbury, T. Parnell Beach and a host of lesser known abolitionists were feared and reviled throughout the entire New England region. If Rogers had held that clergymen were

responsible for propping up the institution of slavery, then
it remained for these radicals to topple both evils once and for
all.

CHAPTER VI

NOTES

¹ Herald of Freedom, January 28, 1842.

² Liberator, January 8, 1841. Rogers went so far as to claim that northern free blacks were more miserable than southern slaves. New Bedford, Massachusetts contained the "finest set of colored people" Rogers had ever seen. "I attribute it," he wrote "to their being many of them fugitive slaves, and not having undergone the degradation of free Negro education, which is far more crushing than Southern slavery." Rogers to Richard Webb, September 23, 1842, Anti-slavery collections, Boston Public Library.

³ Liberator, January 8, 1841.

⁴ There is no specific citation for this paragraph; I have extracted these points from the bulk of his writing from 1840 to 1843. Rogers' articles were not similar to the lucid, well-structured, essays that Garrison wrote. Repetitive, rhetorical--even by the abolitionists' standards--and all-inclusive, Rogers often hid his major points beneath the surface of his occasional lengthy, meandering articles. I have tried to use specific citations whenever possible, but at times it has been necessary to extract the basic elements of his thought from a host of sources. For this paragraph, the closest citations are: Herald of Freedom, January 28, 1842, and Liberator, June 11, 1841.

⁵ Herald of Freedom, January 14, 1842. Rogers also noted that the clergy had "usurped the place of God on earth" and "Lord . . . over his heritage."

⁶ Ibid., January 28, 1842. This article, one of the lengthier ones Rogers was ever to write, capsulizes some of the major points he would make throughout the remainder of his career.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ For some inexplicable reason, Rogers felt that, while all political endeavors were corrupt, politics in the west was less immoral.

¹⁰ Herald of Freedom, April 8, 1842. In a similar point, Rogers noted that if slaves were imprisoned "and all we wanted was to effect their literal release" then political action would suffice.

But slavery involved more; blacks were "enslaved . . . in the hearts of people" and political action could not alter the fact--but moral suasion could. See Herald of Freedom, February 11, 1842.

- 11 Ibid., January 28, 1842.
- 12 Rogers to Richard Webb, September 22, 1840, ASC-BPL.
- 13 Ibid., July 20, 1842, ASC-BPL.
- 14 Ibid., September 22, 1840, ASC-BPL.
- 15 Ibid., July 20, 1842, ASC-BPL.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 "To the Anti-Slavery Members of a Pro-Slavery Church," reprinted in Liberator, January 29, 1841.
- 18 The term "excommunication" was used by radical abolitionists whether, in fact, one had been excommunicated or had merely "come-out" voluntarily. Rogers, as will be seen, was considered "excommunicated" by other radical abolitionists, even though there is no evidence that sustains that point.
On February 8, 1841, Rogers wrote an impatient letter to the Plymouth Congregational Church when the church asked him to attend a meeting to answer questions concerning his views of the church and his membership in it. He refused, angrily stating: "My letter was a withdrawal of my fellowship with you as a body. . . ." Rogers to "The Congregational Church in Plymouth," February 8, 1841, Quaker Collections, Haverford College Library.
- 19 Rogers to Francis Jackson, March 28, 1841, ASC-BPL.
- 20 Rogers to William Lloyd Garrison, March 14, 1841, ASC-BPL.
- 21 Liberator, April 23, 1841.
- 22 Rogers to Francis Jackson, July 20, 1843, ASC-BPL.
- 23 Rogers to the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, reprinted in Liberator, February 12, 1841.
- 24 Emancipator, February 2, 1843. See also, June 10, 1841 and July 14, 1842 for additional critiques of the clergy.
- 25 Ibid., October 13, 1842.
- 26 Ibid., April 28 and June 9, 1842.
- 27 Ibid., July 17, 1844.
- 28 Mathews, Slavery and Methodism, pp. 132-33.

- 29 Emancipator, October 20, 1842.
- 30 Liberator, October 21, 1842.
- 31 Emancipator, September 22, 1842.
- 32 Ibid., December 1, 1842; June 29, 1843.
- 33 Liberator, May 14, 1842; Herald of Freedom, April 29, 1842.
For other anti-slavery resolutions passed by New Hampshire churches
see Herald of Freedom, August 18, 1842; Emancipator, October 21, 1841;
December 8, 1842.
- 34 See, for example, Herald of Freedom, October 7, 1842.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 Ibid., April 15, 1842.
- 37 Ibid., January 28, 1842.
- 38 Liberator, December 9, 1842.
- 39 Herald of Freedom, January 7, 1842. As abolitionists,
Rogers wrote, "we are compelled to desire their [individual sects']
downfall--and that it be speedy."
- 40 Liberator, April 28, 1843.
- 41 Herald of Freedom, April 15, 1842.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 Ibid.
- 44 Ibid., April 8, 1842. See also Pillsbury's denunciation of
the Freewillers in Ibid., September 16, 1842.
- 45 Liberator, March 31, 1843.
- 46 Ibid., May 5, 1843. Garrison was more blunt. The Millerites,
he said, were "laboring under a marvelous delusion." Ibid.
- 47 Herald of Freedom, October 7, 1842.
- 48 Ibid., October 14, 1842.
- 49 Ibid., May 6, 1842.
- 50 Ibid., April 15, 1842.
- 51 Ibid., January 14 and January 28, 1842.

⁵² In the next few years Garrison and Rogers would disagree--and quarrel--over the nature of the union, its dissolution, the advisability of come-outerism, and a host of other issues (see Chapter VIII).

⁵³ Charolette Weston to Mary Weston, October 29, 1842, ASC-BPL.

⁵⁴ Herald of Freedom, January 21, 1842. See also Ibid., May 6, 1842.

⁵⁵ Ibid., January 21, 1842.

CHAPTER VII

'SONS OF THUNDER': RADICAL ABOLITIONISM AT HIGH TIDE

In the summer of 1842, a Boston abolitionist noted that the cause in New Hampshire was "one of no ordinary character; it is the commencement of a mighty revolution which will result in the demolition of clerical tyranny and the promotion of genuine religion."¹ Indeed, the unique quality of the abolitionist movement in New Hampshire was recognized by a great many fellow anti-slavery adherents. Awed by the earnestness of the radicals, Garrison referred to the abolitionists of the Granite State as the "sons of thunder." Rogers himself made every effort to inform old organizationists that the New Hampshire group was "advancing" beyond the confines of currently accepted practices in agitating the question. This "advancement" took the form of what Rogers and his followers called "free speech." The concept of "free speech" seemed innocuous enough but when translated into action, it took the form of interrupting church services to plead for the slave and to denounce a "Turkish" clergy. More often than not, this led to physical ejection from the church. New Hampshire abolitionists of the old organization led the country in this sort of activity and, as a result, they were branded by friend and foe alike as thorough-going radicals.

Surprisingly, historians have not examined fully the impact of the New Hampshire radicals, the methods they employed, and the reactions they generated among both abolitionists and non-abolitionists.

Some historians have relegated individual New Hampshire abolitionists to the outer limits of the abolitionist crusade and, therefore, dismissed them as colorful but inconsequential. Others, in exploring various aspects of radical abolitionist activities, have included individual New Hampshire radicals--especially Rogers and Stephen Foster--but have placed them in a national context.² In both cases historians have removed the radicals from their major arena of activity--the state of New Hampshire, and, in some cases, northern Massachusetts. While their impact on the national movement may have been slight, their impact in New Hampshire was profound, for they not only represented the old organization in the Granite State, they were the old organization.

In New Hampshire the leading forces behind the old organization were all come-outers. Rogers' plea to fellow abolitionists to leave their churches certainly molded the style and substance of the New Hampshire crusade. Whether he was solely responsible for the numerous withdrawals from the New Hampshire churches is difficult to ascertain, but whatever the case, New Hampshire became the hotbed for come-outerism and Rogers liberally promoted the tactic in the Herald of Freedom.

The three most active come-outers among the Granite State abolitionists--besides, of course, Rogers--were Stephen Foster, Parker Pillsbury, and T. Parnel Beach. Foster has been often cited as an example of the erratic maladjusted segment of the movement. Clearly, he was the most acerbic, outspoken foe of the clergy and one of anti-slavery's most active "field men." He prepared for the

ministry at Andover Seminary but when the school balked at his abolitionist zeal he left to devote his life to the slave. He also "came-out" of the Canterbury New Hampshire Congregational Church when that body proved too timid for his non-resistant, abolitionist stance.³

His language was so harsh that he more than anyone else in New Hampshire was castigated at one time or another by every segment of society, save his most loyal allies. His activities were continually monitored by the religious journals, which occasionally even published his private conversations. In the summer of 1840, the Christian Panoply registered its horror at Foster's denunciations of the clergy, not because he reviled a sacred office but because of the personal nature of his attack. While at the home of the Reverend Samuel Rogers of Bradford, Foster said he sought to paralyze the influence of all ministers who were not abolitionists. Not only did he denounce benevolent societies as the "whore of Rome," but he compared the Reverend Jonathan Curtis of Pittsfield--the leader of the new organization in New Hampshire--with Benedict Arnold. Other well-known ministers did not escape condemnation by "this infatuated young man": the Reverend F.P. Tracy of Boscawen was a "liar and a hypocrite," the Reverend Burnham of Pembroke was a "tyrant," and the Reverend Patrick of Canterbury was an "anti-Christian."⁴

Foster was at his pinnacle in 1842 when he published Brotherhood of Thieves, a vitriolic attack on the "heathenish" clergy. The pamphlet was praised by most radical abolitionists and it soon found its way into a second printing. With its publication he got his wish, enunciated at the 1841 New England ASS:

When I pass through the streets, I want to have the blackcoats to look at me as one who has branded them as a brotherhood of thieves--as one who considers them meaner than the horse-thief who is sent to the penitentiary.⁵

Whether attacking the clergy, the state, new organizationists, or slavery itself, Stephen Foster was an important cog in the radical New Hampshire faction.

Similarly, Parker Pillsbury also served the radical cause in New Hampshire. Ordained a Congregational minister, Pillsbury served the Loudon church for only a short while. He was dismissed for his radical positions on abolition and temperance, issues that did not impress "the aristocracy" within the Loudon church. Disgusted with the conservative nature of "the priesthood," Pillsbury abandoned his profession and joined Rogers in Concord, serving as temporary editor of the Herald whenever Rogers was away. Like Foster, he often traveled widely in New Hampshire and Massachusetts as an abolitionist agent, all the while serving as the major organizer of numerous anti-slavery and non-resistance meetings held within the state. He was a confirmed radical, one who could denounce "clerical tyranny" as harshly as Foster and Rogers. He and Rogers were especially close. On more than one occasion, Rogers was instrumental in raising money for Pillsbury and his family, either as part of a salary, or to help pay for a home.⁶

T. Parnell Beach also claimed allegiance to the radical brand of abolitionism practiced in New Hampshire. Like Pillsbury, Beach was an ordained Congregational minister, serving the residents of Campton, New Hampshire. As an ardent defender of colonization principles, he had resisted the abolitionist assault on that

"pernicious" doctrine until Stephen Fessenden of Maine urged him to read Garrison's Thoughts on African Colonization. Once having read it, he became an outspoken abolitionist to the point that, by the early 1840's, he was a firm supporter of Rogers' and Garrison's non-resistance doctrines.⁷ His exit from "clerical thralldom" was more dramatic than either Rogers', Foster's or Pillsbury's. Rogers and Foster left their respective churches as laymen, while Pillsbury was dismissed by his congregation. Beach, however, as a minister in good standing, dismissed himself in the summer of 1841 before a startled Campton Congregation. Denouncing his profession, he stepped down from the pulpit and informed the congregation that he did not expect them to pay him the remaining two hundred dollars of his salary. Ministers, he said, who have need of a contract had little faith. Upon learning of Beach's unusual action, Rogers praised him, noting that T. Parnel Beach "stands now redeemed, regenerated, and disenthralled."⁸ Following the course of Foster and Pillsbury, Beach scoured the state, haranguing citizens on the evils of slavery and its chief defender, the clergy.

With Rogers flaying away at the clergy, the State, and slavery through his newspaper columns, and with Foster, Pillsbury and Beach "in the field," the New Hampshire contingent of radicals provided a powerful anti-slavery and anti-clerical front. But while these four "sons of thunder" were the molders and leaders, other radicals faced similar circumstances within their churches and communities. These radicals left their churches under their own power, or were excommunicated for their intransigence and outspokenness. In either case, once gone from the church, they contributed numerous articles

to the Herald, Liberator and other papers or, on occasion, joined Foster, Pillsbury and Beach in the field. Many more remained in their community, attacking slavery and the "Turkish clergy" which bolstered the institution.

While it is not necessary to dwell on every case, it is worthwhile to examine a few of the experiences of these come-outers or excommunicants in order to illustrate the extremes to which the radical New Hampshireites went. In most cases, anti-slavery principles were mixed with non-resistant and anti-clerical ones, but upon occasion the abolitionist element was subordinate to the other two. Rogers occasionally complained about such matters, although he did point out that these issues were inexorably connected, for a true anti-slavery man could not have fellowship with a heathenish clergy. In fact, Rogers claimed that those who left the church because of non-resistant principles only--fewer than those who left because of abolitionist and non-resistant principles--were engaging in anti-slavery techniques.

Indeed, it mattered little if one left the church for reasons other than strictly abolitionist ones, provided they were linked with them. This practice was first conceived and nurtured by radical abolitionists. For instance, Joshua Lunt "came out" of the Somersworth Congregational Church not because of anti-slavery principles but because of non-resistant ones. Nevertheless, Rogers reported the story since such incidents were crucial in toppling the clergy. Even if some of the purely non-resistant come-outers were not aware of their importance to radical anti-slavery tactics, Rogers insisted that they provided a much-needed blow against

slavish authority.⁹

Benjamin Chase was more typical of the come-outer spirit, for he was an abolitionist and a non-resistant who, upon leaving the Chester Presbyterian Church, remained in the community and wrote numerous anti-slavery and anti-clerical articles for the Herald of Freedom. Chase's case was given a great deal of space in the Herald because he was a ruling elder at the time of his withdrawal. For a man of his station to come-out of the church represented a clear rebuke to its ministry, and may well have served as a warning to clergymen elsewhere. Certainly Chase's actions rivaled Beach's withdrawal from the ministry.

Chase had joined the Presbyterian Church thinking that it was founded upon the gospels, but by the winter of 1841 he had second thoughts. Indeed, he felt that practices within the Presbyterian church both in Chester and elsewhere in the United States were "opposed to the spirit of the gospel" and "altogether at variance with pure Christianity." Like most non-resistants, he resented the various ruling bodies within the church structure since they defied the Biblical precept that "one is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren" (Matt 23:8). Chase's resentment of ruling bodies extended to the minister himself. The qualifications for those who were chosen to preach usually consisted of college diplomas, knowledge of ancient languages and other unnecessary criteria. For Chase, such trappings had little to do with preaching God's word.

Even more disturbing was the Presbyterian Church's stance on the slavery issue. As a Presbyterian Chase had rejoiced that the General Assembly had twice denounced slavery, as a "gross violation

of the most sacred rights of human nature," once in 1794 and again in 1818. One would expect, therefore, that excommunication awaited all those who were guilty of slaveholding. But, Chase noted, they remained in the church and the church did nothing to alter the situation. In fact, the Presbyterian Assembly of 1841 chose to ignore the abolitionist debate, voting instead to return unopened all anti-slavery petitions. Concerned more with placating southern Presbyterians than attacking slavery, the General Assembly violated the principles of 1794 and 1818.

Worse, even local churches were reluctant to pass anti-slavery resolutions and, in some cases, defended the evil. By recognizing pro-slavery elements within Presbyterianism, the church was "throwing the mantle of Christianity around them." In light of 1794 and 1818--not to mention the scriptures--this was the worst kind of hypocrisy. By the early 1840's it was obvious to Chase that he worshiped a different Christ than the organized church. Therefore, he requested "that no title, civil or ecclesiastical be henceforth bestowed upon me." After renouncing his position as ruling elder, he renounced Presbyterianism itself but not Christianity. If others in the Chester church did not follow him from the church, they were living a lie; they were worshiping a doctrine bereft of Christian principles and they were running the risk of being condemned on judgment day. But for Chase " . . . my skirts are clear of the blood of your souls."¹⁰

Likewise, Simon Terry, following Rogers' prescriptions, left the Concord Methodist Church after despairing over its inactivity in the abolitionist cause. The sectarian church, Terry concluded,

stood in the way of abolitionism "forming a kind of sectarian-church-militant, or, military 'hollow square' for the monster's protection."¹¹ In Cornish, a similar incident occurred when an unidentified abolitionist withdrew from the town's Baptist Church because that body refused to denounce war and slavery. In addition, the minister had continually tolerated intemperance and the "aristocratic principles and practices" among church members. Therefore, the distraught member "withdrew" from the church, stating: "I charge you with a breach of covenant with me."¹²

Not all come-outers left their churches voluntarily; many were excommunicated. Abolitionist Luther Melandy was excommunicated from the Amherst Congregational Church because he refused to take communion and because he was instrumental in bringing the radical non-resistant Henry C. Wright to the community. When Melandy was excommunicated, ten others followed him out of the church in protest. Melandy's attitude was characteristic of come-outerism in New Hampshire:

. . . I have no complaints to make. I am glad it is done, and that I am now separated, never, I think, to come under such a yoke again. I am separated not only from the Amherst Congregational Church, but from the Congregational sect, and all other religious sects and denominations, holding them all to be at war with the true Church of Christ.¹³

In similar fashion, a man in Portsmouth was excommunicated by the North Congregational Church for criticizing the pro-slavery nature of the communicants and, in Orford, Henry Todd was excommunicated for urging his congregation to receive T. Parnel Beach, who was scheduled to speak in the town. In the latter case, three deacons of the church took it upon themselves to excommunicate Todd, who they felt was disrespectful, "disorganizing and heretical."¹⁴

Whether one withdrew from the church voluntarily or was excommunicated, the evidence suggests that it involved a certain amount of personal anguish and pained reflection. Persis Seavey and her husband left the Loudon Congregational Church over a number of issues, but the major impetus was the Reverend Jonathan Le Bosquet's denunciation of Rogers, Pillsbury and the "company of fools and liars" inhabiting the New Hampshire Anti-Slavery Society. The Seaveys left the church but did so reluctantly. Persis was born and raised in Loudon and was a life-long member of the Congregational Church. Her childhood friends were members and she had no personal quarrel with them. By leaving her church Persis abandoned a part of herself; she was turning her back to an institution which had molded her outlook and gave meaning to her life. But she and her husband reached the decision that Le Bosquet and his congregation were all sinners. Persis and her husband could not escape from the fact that the object of the church was "not that the individual may grow in grace, but to keep up distinctions in society." Hence, to keep firm to their anti-slavery and non-resistance principles, the Seaveys withdrew.¹⁵

The impact of the come-outers was not lost upon the New Hampshire abolitionists. Rogers and his Herald waxed enthusiastic over the number of church withdrawals occurring within the state, for it was a sure sign that anti-slavery sentiment was increasing.¹⁶ "Self-emancipation from the prison house of Sectarianism and clerical enslavement," read one exaggerated editorial in the Herald, "are becoming as common as escapes from the South into Canada."¹⁷ And it was increasingly clear that Rogers, Foster, Pillsbury and Beach

had a great deal to do with encouraging such action. One woman from Exeter "came-out" after hearing Foster and Pillsbury state that she must reject slavery and all institutions that sustained it, including the churches.¹⁸

The come-outer spirit of the New Hampshire abolitionists was injected into general anti-slavery meetings whenever Rogers, Pillsbury, or Foster were in attendance. No resolution could be passed before one of the New Hampshire group would urgently call for all abolitionists to come-out of their churches. At the Essex county (Massachusetts) anti-slavery convention, for example, Pillsbury resolved that:

. . . the Sectarian corporations and other bodies called churches . . . have shown themselves to be like Babylon in Apocalyptic vision,--the habitation of devils,--the hold of every foul spirit,--and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird; and it is the imperious duty of abolitionists to come out of them that they be not partakers in their sin, and that they receive not their plagues.¹⁹

Not all abolitionists were comfortable with the come-outers, especially after Rogers' increasing insistence that to be a true abolitionist one must withdraw from the church. The harshest criticism of the come-outer tactic was levelled by David Lee Child, editor of the National Anti-Slavery Standard. Conservative, Whiggish, and pro-political, Child had nevertheless remained with the old organization, but represented its most conservative wing. Rogers never cared for Child personally and had early criticized the New York paper for being faint-hearted and mild.²⁰ For his part, Child disliked the come-outer tactic for it meant not only coming out of churches, but out of political parties as well.

Decrying come-outerism as a "sham," Child argued that it may

not suit every abolitionist in the country to leave his church and to renounce all political affiliations. To force this tactic upon all abolitionists--as Child implied the New Hampshire group was attempting--was not consistent with the Constitution of the AASS; it was destructive of individual freedom and the broad platform of the old organization. Abolitionists do not, or should not, force distinction based on creed, whether that be Calvinism, Fourierism, Catholicism or "Foster - and - Beachism." Chiding the sons of thunder, he insisted that "all are equal on the anti-slavery platform," and that they had no right to "intrude these opinions upon the abolition platform." If an abolitionist is a non-resistant then let him join a non-resistant society; if he is a Fourierist, then let him join the Fourierist movement. "His abolition character will not be blemished by any or all of these things, nor his rights as a member of our Society destroyed or impaired." He went on to complain about the zealousness of the come-outers by insisting that no individual had the right to use the time, newspapers, meetings, funds, and influence of the AASS "to propagate or recommend his views of any general or other particular reform, however interesting, desirable, and feasible, it may seem to be." Continuing, Child noted that politics was a fruitful avenue to pursue anti-slavery goals, especially independent nominations.²¹

Child's direct attack on the come-outers was the culmination of veiled sniping and general antagonism between the New Hampshire group and more conservative elements within the old organization. Rogers' opinion of Child and the National Anti-Slavery Standard have been addressed above. But others within the movement were voicing

their opinions of both Rogers and Child. It was the Massachusetts abolitionists, led by Garrison, who continually sought to smooth ruffled feathers and to assuage bruised egos in the attempt to avoid an outright split reminiscent of 1840. In the summer of 1842, Garrison, citing the Standard and Herald as examples of the two extremes within the old organization, admonished his fellow abolitionists to end harsh criticism of one another. Some abolitionists, he observed, thought the Standard was too literary and needed more fire, while others believed that Rogers was too fiery and that he was conducting the Herald in poor taste. Garrison's point was that both factions could work within the same framework and that AASS had no desire to muzzle any of their separate enterprises.²²

But Child's worried response to the increasing radicalism of the New Hampshire abolitionists elicited other voices, most of them seeking to avoid a narrowing of the anti-slavery platform. Two weeks after Child's article was reprinted in the Liberator, "M.C.W." tried to reassure Child and other "conservatives" that the AASS would never exclusively propagate the "ultra" position at the expense of others--"the hour that it does so, it necessarily dies,"--implying that while it was acceptable for New Hampshirites to embrace "ultra" proposals, the Society would never narrow its base solely for them.²³ In similar fashion, Edmund Quincy noted that there was great confusion about the come-outer stance and the AASS role in such radical measures. While attempting to be even-handed, Quincy's remarks were nevertheless clearly directed against Rogers and the New Hampshire come-outers, a group with which the Bostonian was gradually losing patience. Echoing Child, Quincy was especially

disturbed with Rogers' doctrinaire position that abolitionists must leave churches and parties in order to end slavery. "Anti-slavery has no right to demand of any man," lectured Quincy, "to give up any of his opinions or practices--excepting so far as they stand in the way of the abolition of slavery." For instance, individuals could work within a party to purify it, and the anti-slavery cause does not--nor did it ever--demand that an abolitionist leave it.

Democrat Thomas Earle and Whig David Lee Child were both abolitionists, but they refused to support their party if it hindered their abolitionism or promoted pro-slavery. These men, said Quincy, were not subject to censure by any abolitionist. Likewise, if a member of a church feels uncomfortable with his church's pro-slavery stance, then to come-out of it is to be applauded. But if one chose to stay within the church to purify it, then that too was acceptable. In a more pointed comment undoubtedly directed at Rogers and the radicals, he proclaimed that

anti-slavery has no right to demand of a man to give up his Methodism, Congregationalism, Unitarianism or Universalism, his belief in church, ministry, or Sabbath, any more than it has to demand the reception of any of these opinions.²⁴

Undeniably, come-outerism--as required behavior--was not applauded by most New England abolitionists, and the vociferous propagation of such methods served to alienate a segment of the anti-slavery adherents, ranging from the conservative Childs to the more Garrisonian-oriented Quincy. However, such reaction did not deter the New Hampshire group. Casting denunciations and rebukes to the wind, they began to engage in "free speech," a practice which called for the abolitionists to attend a church

service and, when the opportunity presented itself, to rise from the pew to address the congregations and clergy on the evils of slavery and the church's role in bolstering it. By the early 1840's, the disruption of the churches became the distinct style of the radical New Hampshire abolitionists and, for them, a necessary device in the movement to free the slave. Foster, Pillsbury, Beach and assorted local, less well-known, radicals engaged in such disruptions, usually precipitating physical assaults and, in some cases, even jail sentences.

Stephen Foster was certainly the most active in the "free speech" campaign. So persistent were his activities and so predictable were the subsequent "mobocratic" reactions that many abolitionists could not bring themselves to endorse such methods. Garrison noted with some concern that Foster was "remarkably successful in raising the spirit of mobocracy wherever he goes." Garrison seemed uncomfortable with the "free speech" campaign, but he noted to his wife, that it was "useless to reason with him with any hope of altering his course."²⁵

Nor was Parker Pillsbury any more than Foster able to be dissuaded from speaking freely in the houses of God. In fact, the two men often worked in tandem especially in New Hampshire. One of the first churches Foster and Pillsbury attended was the Congregational church in Franklin, New Hampshire. When Foster stood to speak, the Reverend Isaac Knight left the church, prior to the end of the service, causing an uproar and general confusion. Although most of the congregation followed Knight from the church, Foster claimed that they wanted to hear him speak but were afraid

of displeasing "their master."

The two abolitionists were even less successful that same night at a general anti-slavery meeting in the town. Heckled by the audience and threatened with physical abuse, Foster and Pillsbury were forced to discontinue their discussion. Such behavior was, in Foster's opinion, the result of the Reverend Knight's displeasure with the abolitionist movement in general. "Is not the mob alarming proof," Foster asked Knight, "that you are co-operating with friends from perdition in the perpetuity of slavery, and not with Rogers and his coadjutors in its overthrow?"²⁶

Foster was convinced that individual clergymen fomented angry mobs. After interrupting the service of the Reverend Caleb Tracy, the Congregational minister at Boscawen Plain, Foster was escorted from the church upon the direct orders of Tracy. The next Sunday, Foster returned, only this time the meeting was converted "into an infuriated mob" with Foster being "dragged" from the church. The Reverend Tracy, and not Foster, was responsible for "these mobocratic and heathenish proceedings."²⁷

Often churches brought charges against Foster, leading inevitably to fines or jail sentences. But Foster--as well as other New Hampshire radicals--refused to pay any fine and he even instructed his friends not to pay, for what better way to illustrate the slave's plight than through incarceration? Thus, in the spring of 1842, the deacons and minister of the Nashua Baptist Church brought charges against Foster, resulting in his spending a short time at the Hillsborough County Jail. Three women tried to bail him out, but according to Pillsbury, "he thinks and rightly doubtless, that God

calls him to suffer. He rejoices in it."²⁸

Foster continued his activity and everywhere received similar treatment, whether from a small church or a large one. He made a special effort to disrupt the most prestigious churches in the state. The Reverend Daniel Bouton's North Congregational Church in Concord, considered by many to be the most influential Congregational church in the state, handled the uninvited Foster roughly; several deacons collared Foster and literally threw him out the door and down the steps.²⁹ In Dover, Foster invaded most of the churches with the same results. He also attended various colonizationist and new organizationist meetings throughout the area demanding to be heard. His angry audiences seldom gave him a chance.³⁰

Not content with disrupting churches in New Hampshire, Foster traveled throughout the northeast in order that the "mute" might hear his message. From 1842 through 1845, he took several trips to the state of New York, and in the summer of 1843 was physically ejected from the First Presbyterian Church in New York City. In Philadelphia, an important Quaker Congregation overpowered Foster and took him to the mayor's office, demanding that he be arrested. In Providence, Rhode Island, Foster was saved from a frenzied mob by the quick action of women abolitionists who surrounded him. He was not so lucky in Portland, Maine, however. His reputation preceded him to that town, and the anti-abolitionists were waiting for the slightest provocation to silence him. They did not have a long wait. At an anti-slavery meeting conducted, not in a church but in city hall, he was interrupted with hoots, screams, and numerous rotten eggs. Enraged over Foster's denunciation of

churches, some citizens rushed the hall crying, "murder the damned abolitionist." After they had succeeded in disrupting the meeting, about five hundred angry residents followed Foster from the hall, and a few were able to tear his coat collar and strike him about the face and head. According to Foster, the only chance he had to save his life was to seek refuge in the home of a woman abolitionist. Even though the mob followed him there, it did not attack him, for the Mayor of Portland arrived in time to disperse the crowd.³¹

Foster was not alone in his assault upon the churches. T. Parnel Beach also participated in "speaking freely" and, as might be expected, met the same fate as Foster. Professing to be "a non-commissioned officer in the clerical ranks," Beach continually announced that his one burning desire was to chase the clergy from the pulpit into the pews with the rest of the congregation. By "standing up" in church, he hoped to persuade the people that "the pulpit does not belong to Christianity. It is a mere thing of human invention at the Devil's instigation." Most church members, Beach proclaimed, would not believe that their clergy were imbued with the spirit of "the slave-whipper, unless they should see them seize and drag from the 'temple of God' an innocent brother and disciple of Jesus, whose only crime is that he bears a faithful testimony against sin!!"³² Thus, if it took "dragging outs" to convince the congregations that the clergy were pro-slavery, then Beach was prepared to do his part in the crusade.

Although he participated in the "free speech" tactic, he did not equal Foster, either in the number of churches he visited or the responses elicited from the congregations.³³ But in the summer

of 1842, Beach engaged in two separate but widely publicized incidents that served to elevate him in the movement, placing him on the platform of martyrdom with Foster. Ironically, both incidents occurred in Massachusetts.

The first incident took place at Lynn where all four sons of thunder--Rogers, Pillsbury, Foster and Beach--were to attend an anti-slavery convention. While in the town, they stopped uninvited at a Quaker meeting, presumably to speak in behalf of the slave. The congregation looked "ridiculous" to Rogers because they were sitting in silence and segregated by sex; they looked so ridiculous that Rogers was "ashamed." Not long after the four took their seats, Beach arose and delivered a fifteen minute oration on the plight of black slaves. Eventually several of the "broad-brims" asked for silence, but Beach refused. Exasperated, the Quakers stood, shook hands, and began to file out of the building. Then Foster arose and began speaking. Some Quakers, "unable to bear it any longer," turned and collared him; but more even-tempered ones prevailed and persuaded his captors to release Foster. "With an amazing audacity," Foster then climbed atop the "High Seat," haranguing his audience. Flustered, but "awed," the Quakers allowed Foster to continue and, when he was finished, left the building. Meanwhile, Beach had rushed to the Lynn Methodist church where he was dragged out and, according to him, "seriously injured." Having dispensed with the Quakers, Foster then ran to the Lynn Baptist church where he was chased into a broom closet underneath the stairs. For the radicals it was a glorious achievement, and they had physical proof of their

activity: at the hands of the Methodists, Beach had received a dislocated thumb, while Foster had had his coat collar torn by the Quakers and a shirt cuff ripped by the Baptists.³⁴

While this incident produced only a war of words in the press between the Quakers and the radical abolitionists, the second incident led to more serious consequences, especially for T. Parnel Beach. About a week after the Lynn incident, he and Foster traveled to Danvers, Massachusetts, for the sole purpose of interrupting several church services. While Foster went to South Danvers, Beach remained in Danvers proper, where he chose to attend the Baptist Church. Although he and other New Hampshire radicals had been warned as early as April by a Massachusetts ally that the Danvers Baptist Church was "under the protection" of three militia officers and that they were waiting specifically for such intruders, Beach chose to occupy the church nevertheless.³⁵

After interrupting the service, Beach was escorted from the church. Instead of re-entering, he found his way to the home of Jesse Harriman, a sympathetic Danvers abolitionist. The town authorities arrived to arrest the New Hampshire intruder but when Harriman refused to surrender Beach, both were placed under arrest. Harriman was placed in the Salem jail while Beach went to the Newburyport jail. But Beach got another surprise. Not only had he been indicted for his activities at the Danvers Baptist Church; he was also indicted for disrupting the Lynn Quakers. When recounting the story in the columns of the Herald, Harriman's rage at the "peaceful" Quakers was not suppressed: "I feel, and the slave feels, that it is high time this Quaker nest should be stirred up, and to

the very bottom too."³⁶

Rogers was even more disturbed. He believed that the Quakers were more advanced than other denominations, but when "they exploded like so much gunpowder at him [Beach] . . . in their 'quiet' way" it became obvious to everyone that they were still imprisoned by sectarianism. The Quakers could practice "simple" speech and "quiet" behavior, yet they "are full of violence and murder all the while"; in fact, Quakers "are ravening wolves, with the other murderous sects of the day." Nor did Rogers forget that the "Bloody Baptists" were also responsible for Beach's imprisonment: they were dipped in water but they would prefer it to be human blood.³⁷

Historians seeking a model for the martyr-complex exhibited by abolitionists need look no further than T. Parnel Beach. His letters to Rogers and Garrison, as well as his writings in "A Voice From Jail,"--a small sheet he produced while imprisoned--abound in self-pity, martyrdom, and saintliness. On the one hand he urged fellow abolitionists not to pity him, for the spirit of God sustained him. Yet, on the other, he claimed that Garrison had somehow neglected him, either by not printing letters of support as soon as they came into his Boston office, or by not devoting sufficient space in the Liberator to his plight. Both charges were unfair, for Garrison had devoted his own editorials to the Beach case, as well as printing numerous letters from Beach and his supporters.³⁸

Like Foster, Beach reveled in his imprisonment. "I am willing," he wrote Garrison, "to taste his [the slave's] cup of sufferings, as well as his toil." He was glad he was "caged," just as those in slavery were caged. The "trials" that he had gone through—including

"sleepless" nights--made it possible "to utter sentiments like these." Yet, while he would often attack the Quakers and Baptists for allowing a man who spoke against the general evils of the day to be locked up with "the thief and murderer," Beach, like Christ, promised that his enemies "shall live in my heart, whatever they do to me."³⁹

The Beach case soon became a cause celebre throughout New Hampshire and northern Massachusetts. "Beach Rallies" and special conventions were held in Danvers, Georgetown, and Newburyport, Massachusetts, as well as in Milford, New Hampshire. At Georgetown, the large turnout applauded Beach for stating in a letter that he was overjoyed to be "permitted to share their [the slaves'] bondage," while urging other abolitionists to live and suffer--and, if need be, to die--as Jesus did. The Georgetown audience was so moved that they passed several vitriolic anti-clerical resolutions aimed especially at the Baptists and Quakers.⁴⁰ In Thornton, New Hampshire, abolitionists condemned the churches for imprisoning Beach, whose only crime was to obey "the dictates of his conscience." They continued by declaring that whenever Beach, Foster and others were ejected from a church for preaching Christian principles, then those churches were "not of Christ but are anti-Christ." At Littleton, New Hampshire, abolitionists resolved that the church and state cooperated with one another to imprison men such as Foster and Beach and that "we repudiate all fellowship with any system of religion which makes Civil Law the rule of Christian duty--which relies upon the State for protection--which fines, imprisons, hangs or shoots, its supposed enemies." Likewise, the Littleton abolitionists warned

their fellow citizens "against such a religion, as against that moral poison whose touch is pollution, and whose embrace is death."⁴¹ The crusade to free Beach ended in late December, 1842, when he was allowed to leave jail.⁴²

While Beach's case was the most publicized, other lesser-known New Hampshire radicals faced similar treatment; some even experienced imprisonment. Nat Allen and Erastus Brown, a saddler and shoemaker respectively, were both arrested on August 30, 1842 in Littleton, New Hampshire, for "speaking in meeting in behalf of the slave." Transported to Haverhill, both radicals served sixteen days in the rat-infested county jail. This experience seems to have dampened Brown's spirit, but not Allen's. Upon his release, Allen returned to Littleton and once again interrupted church services. After being ejected twice from the church, Allen entered an unguarded side door and continued his denunciation of the church and slavery. The flustered minister discontinued church services and Allen once again found himself under arrest. At his well-attended trial, Allen was fined a total of sixty-three dollars, which he refused to pay, announcing that he would rather go to jail. He further announced to the startled magistrate that he would have to be physically carried to the jailhouse, since he would not go voluntarily. The sheriff asked several members of the crowd to help carry Allen down two flights of stairs, but no one offered their services. The sheriff ordered the spectators to help, then offered money for assistance, but no one volunteered. It was left solely for the sheriff to carry Allen down the stairs which, as one sympathizer noted, "was doubtless rather an uphill business

for a downstairs job, as Allen acted out non-resistance in its limberest form." Once the panting sheriff had carried him downstairs he was faced with the task of lifting Allen into a wagon by himself, since again no one volunteered to help him.

According to one witness, there was "great indignation" over the entire episode because most citizens did not feel that the popular Allen should be forced to spend the winter months in the "filthy" jail. Money gathered from the citizens--many of whom were members of the church--was used to pay Allen's fine, which the court accepted. While the Littleton abolitionist did not have to spend another term in jail, he was upset that the citizens came to his aid. In a letter to Rogers, Allen noted he did not want the fine paid. "I told the people that the fine was going to feed the creature that was devouring me . . . when will people learn that human rights cannot be bought with money?"⁴³

John Orvis was another New Hampshire "free speaker" of some repute. A major organizer of the New Hampshire Non-Resistance Society, Orvis attended churches throughout the New Hampshire and Vermont area, and predictably, was physically ejected from them all. At Hancock, New Hampshire, Orvis met the wrath of the "mobocratic" Congregational Church under the "subaltern aristocracy" of Archibald Burgess, "Pastor of a Synagogue of Satan" and an "emissary of the Evil one."⁴⁴ One of his most famous encounters occurred in Newburyport, Massachusetts, where Orvis, Nat Allen and two other radical abolitionists traveled to plea for the release of Beach. While the pregnant Mrs. Beach and another woman abolitionist waited

outside, the four men entered the church, where Allen first arose and twice proclaimed: "I hear the groans of two millions of slaves." When the congregation acted to remove Allen, Orvis began shouting at the attackers, demanding they free his fellow-abolitionist. Orvis was thereupon thrust to the floor "and dragged along like a dead dog" until he was literally tossed from the church. All were eventually ejected, only to go back again, where they were at least able "to get off a few truths." Orvis proudly wrote that before the church service could end there "were no less than seven drag-outs in one night." So intense was the "mob" that Orvis believed that the "only reason why we were not murdered on the spot, was because we did not make any resistance."⁴⁵

The reaction against the New Hampshire radicals was confined not only to the churches that they attended uninvited. In the course of speaking engagements or general anti-slavery meetings, most of the radicals found themselves the targets of an angry crowd. At a Hancock, New Hampshire church, an anti-slavery meeting was disrupted by rock-throwing, bell-ringing, and the forcible take-over of the pulpit by a group of angry anti-abolitionists; at Chester, New Hampshire an angry crowd disrupted a meeting attended by Pillsbury and Foster by accusing both men of being "brothel visitors" and by ridiculing Foster for wearing glasses. When he left the meeting, Pillsbury discovered that his carriage had been daubed with cow manure, seats and all. At Nantucket and New Bedford, Massachusetts, Rogers and Foster met the disapproval of local citizens and were splattered with rotten eggs.⁴⁶

Abolitionists of all stripes expected this reaction from most northern audiences, but the New Hampshire group also discovered that within the movement itself, certain individuals did not believe "speaking freely" was a judicious tactic. Foster, especially, elicited either praise, awe, or sarcasm. Predictably, Rogers declared him to be "the hero of the anti-slavery field," while the new organizationist (New York) Liberty Press, although not endorsing his position, noted that the "gifted" Foster "walks over the established rules of society with as much composure as he would eat his breakfast." But others were growing impatient with him. Edmund Quincy sarcastically referred to Foster as "St. Stephen, the connoisseur in martyrdom," while Deborah Weston, reporting the activities of recent anti-slavery meetings to her sister, noted that "we have had most excellent meetings in spite of Stephen Foster." At another meeting, Anne Weston could report that all went well, save for Foster, who made "a foolish and mischievous speech."⁴⁷

William Goodell, although a new organizationist, held much the same opinion of Foster as did Quincy and Garrison; however, Goodell aired his complaints publicly, while Garrison held his tongue, raising his objections to Foster only with his wife. Goodell's grievance was that Foster and other New Hampshire radicals acknowledged only "individual" rights, but in any society there existed "social" rights, as well. No one, Goodell wrote to Rogers, had the right to enter a convention or church without being invited; to do so violated social rights. In fact, the New Hampshire radicals--especially Foster--violated the very principle that they claimed their enemies violated. "I wonder much," Goodell mused,

"that Mr. Foster who cries out so loudly . . . at the arrogant claims of the clergymen should nevertheless seem, himself, to set up the ultra clerical claim of preaching to people whether they will consent to hear him or no."⁴⁸

Garrison's opinion is more difficult to discern, and, even to some extent, is Rogers'. Garrison never participated in the free speech campaign and Rogers attended only the aforementioned Quaker meeting in Lynn, where he acted mainly as an interested by-stander. Historian Carleton Mabey has found that Garrison believed that Foster aroused mob violence and, because of that, was serving, unwittingly perhaps, as the agent of force, a role totally at odds with non-resistant principles.⁴⁹ But Garrison never publicly rebuked him in the Liberator. Instead, the Bostonian focused on the "heathenish mobs" and the "unchristian-like" behavior of communicants who, in ejecting Foster from their churches, resorted to violence. Yet, while defending the radicals against mob violence, Garrison never boldly proclaimed his support for the tactic of free speech. True, he never came out publicly against the tactic, but his silence was irritating to the New Hampshire radicals, especially to Rogers.

The New Hampshire editor recognized the problems with the free speech issue and he understood why many abolitionists chose not to engage in such activity. Echoing Garrison's position, Rogers himself was reluctant to champion the cause since it led to physical force. "I am," he admitted, "afraid to look at the probable results of its adoption." Indeed, except for attending the Quaker meeting in Lynn, Rogers was notably inactive within the crusade to

disrupt church services. Nevertheless, while personally rejecting such a tactic, he believed it was the right of any Christian to speak at a church service. After much soul-searching, Rogers could neither dismiss the tactic nor denounce it. Intellectually, at least, he was converted to the free speech campaign. "I could not dodge it," he explained, "and was unable to gainsay its correctness or its profound wisdom." He could not ignore it, especially after so many New Hampshire radicals had engaged in the tactic.⁵⁰ As a result Rogers, through the Herald of Freedom, supported the activities of the radicals, upholding their right to speak freely in all churches.

Although Rogers was willing to do so, he discovered to his chagrin that the major abolitionist papers chose to ignore it. He condemned the National Anti-Slavery Standard because it was "against us" and he even had some criticism for Garrison:

I complain frankly of the Standard, that it has not taken its usual unshackled course with this question. And I make the same complaint, to some extent, of the Liberator. The free speech question has not been met in pioneer style by either of these papers. It has had to be sustained by the feeble, provincial effort of the barefooted Herald of Freedom.⁵¹

If Rogers felt a sense of isolation, the Massachusetts abolitionists gave him ample reason. Under the temporary editorship of "M.C.W.," the Liberator confirmed that there was a difference of opinion between the Massachusetts and New Hampshire abolitionists over "the freedom of speech question." After stating that the anti-slavery platform was broad enough to contain both elements, M.C.W. noted that the Liberator was unwilling "to dwell on that point

[free speech] at the moment."⁵² As earlier indicated, Garrison shared these sentiments. But he was not the only leading abolitionist who felt uncomfortable with the free speech campaign. M.C.W.'s claim that the Massachusetts abolitionists differed with the radical New Hampshire group was a monumental understatement. Quincy, Ellis Gray Loring, Wendell Phillips, the Weston sisters, and even Rogers' long-time friend, Francis Jackson believed that the tactic was unnecessary and fruitless.⁵³

Despite the fact that the free speech campaign was limited to the New Hampshire come-outers, differences of opinion over its use certainly did not cause a major rift between the Massachusetts abolitionists and their northern neighbors. But tension was growing, especially between Rogers and Garrison, and even between Rogers and his fellow radical come-outers in New Hampshire. Not content with assailing the power of the State and the church, Rogers became convinced that non-resistant principles should be applied to the abolitionist crusade itself. To the horror of his friends and fellow abolitionists, Rogers began articulating the abolishment of all organizational structures within the anti-slavery societies since, to his mind, limited debates, presiding officers, and business committees merely obstructed free and open speech. "No organization," as his position was called, would lead to a nasty quarrel and, eventually, to the death of the New Hampshire Anti-Slavery Society.

CHAPTER VII

NOTES

- ¹ Herald of Freedom, July 22, 1842.
- ² For a discussion of radical abolition see Lewis Perry, Radical Abolition: Anarchy and the Government of God in Antislavery Thought (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973); Carleton Mabey, Black Freedom: The Nonviolent Abolitionists from 1830 to the Civil War (New York: Macmillan Company, 1970).
- ³ See Parker Pillsbury, Acts of the Anti-Slavery Apostles (Concord, New Hampshire: Clague, Wegman, and Schlicht, 1883), especially Chapter Two. Liberator, June 11, 1841.
- ⁴ Christian Panopoly, June 5, 1840.
- ⁵ Liberator, June 5, 1840.
- ⁶ Pillsbury, passim.
- ⁷ See Chapter II.
- ⁸ Liberator, August 20, 1841.
- ⁹ Herald of Freedom, April 5, 1842.
- ¹⁰ Ibid., January 7, 1842; see also the January 14 and January 21 issues.
- ¹¹ Ibid., January 14, 1842.
- ¹² Ibid., May 20, 1842.
- ¹³ Ibid., January 21, 1842.
- ¹⁴ Ibid., April 29, 1842.
- ¹⁵ Ibid., May 27, 1842.
- ¹⁶ Ibid., January 21, 1842.
- ¹⁷ Ibid., May 27, 1842.
- ¹⁸ Ibid., January 21, 1842.
- ¹⁹ Ibid., January 28, 1842.

20 N.P. Rogers to William Lloyd Garrison, July 7, 1841, ASC-BPL. Rogers told Garrison that he was "not generally refreshed by the . . . Standard. . . . it really makes me feel faint."

21 Liberator, September 1, 1843.

22 Ibid., June 17, 1842.

23 Ibid., September 15, 1843.

24 Ibid., September 22, 1843.

25 Quoted in Mabee, p. 207.

26 Herald of Freedom, November 19, 1841; Liberator, December 3, 1841.

27 Ibid., April 15, 1842. Two church members who supported Foster's right to speak were subsequently excommunicated. Ibid., April 22, 1842.

28 Ibid., May 6, 1842.

29 See James Lyford, History of Concord, New Hampshire (Concord: Rumford Press, 1903); Sorin, Abolitionism, p. 71.

30 See Herald of Freedom, April 22, 1842.

31 Ibid., September 30, 1842; Liberator, September 30, 1842; February 17 and December 22, 1843; Emancipator, August 17, 1843 and May 8, 1844.

32 Herald of Freedom, April 22, 1842.

33 Nevertheless, he was widely known--and feared--especially in the northern hill country of New Hampshire. See, for instance, Liberator, December 3, 1841 and Herald of Freedom, January 21, 1842.

34 Herald of Freedom, July 8, 1842; Liberator, July 15, 1842.

35 Herald of Freedom, April 27, 1842.

36 Ibid., September 30, 1842; Liberator, July 29, 1842.

37 Herald of Freedom, September 23 and 30, 1842.

38 Liberator, October 7 and 14, 1842; January 27, 1843.

39 Ibid., October 7 and November 25, 1842; Herald of Freedom, October 14 and December 30, 1842.

40 Liberator, November 18 and 25, 1842; Herald of Freedom, December 30, 1842.

41 Herald of Freedom, December 30, 1842.

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid., September 9 and 30, October 7, 14 and 28, 1842;
Liberator, October 21 and September 23, 1842.

44 Herald of Freedom, January 14 and 21, 1842; Liberator,
February 18, 1842.

45 Liberator, January 13, 1843.

46 Herald of Freedom, August 19 and October 21, 1842; Liberator,
December 3, 1841.

47 N.P. Rogers to Richard Webb, August 5, 1842; Edmund Quincy
to Caroline Weston, June 2, (n.d.), Deborah Weston to Caroline
Weston, (n.d.), Anne Weston to Caroline Weston, June 3, 1843, all
in the ASC-BPL. See also, Emancipator, August 17, 1843; Liberator,
June 10 and July 29, 1842; Herald of Freedom, May 6, 1842.

48 Herald of Freedom, June 24, 1842.

49 See Mabree, Black Freedom, p. 207.

50 Liberator, January 13, 1843.

51 Ibid.

52 Ibid., December 16, 1842.

53 Thomas, The Liberator, pp. 322-23.

CHAPTER VIII

DIVISION, DECLINE, AND DEATH

In the spring of 1843, Nathaniel P. Rogers wrote to fellow-radical Henry C. Wright that the anti-slavery cause in New Hampshire was enjoying such remarkable success that the "people are pouring in and the poor priesthood are receiving their desserts for their pro-slavery." Rogers not only had kind words for both Foster and Pillsbury, the latter now living with Rogers in Concord, but for Garrison as well, a man whom Rogers practically deified. Embarking upon a mawkish fantasy, Rogers envisioned the two men, joined by mutual love, fighting together against the evils of slavery.

Garrison and I love one another well enough to be partners for life. . . . The only trouble would be that one of us should die by and by, which would break us up--I would doff ten years of my age and start even with war worn and scarred Willey Lloyd.¹

That Rogers thought well of Garrison, Foster and Pillsbury is undeniable. But by 1844 he would portray these men as instigators of an insidious conspiracy to smother Rogers' particular--and peculiar--notions of radical abolitionism. Indeed, the last two years of Rogers' life were not pleasant ones: Pillsbury would assume editorship of the Herald of Freedom, Foster would challenge Rogers' radical ideas, and Garrison would angrily denounce the "monomaniac" Rogers.

Even at its height, however, Rogers' love for Garrison, did not mean that he could accept all that Garrison advocated. He was

especially annoyed with Garrison's insistence that there be "no Union with slaveholders." In 1842, the Bostonian introduced resolutions at various conventions calling for the repeal of the Union and, predictably, heated debates were generated. In each convention, the resolutions were tabled, but Garrison was finally able to get one resolution passed at the 1843 Massachusetts Anti-slavery convention, which he subsequently placed at the head of his editorial column: "RESOLVED THAT THE COMPACT WHICH EXISTS BETWEEN THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH IS A 'COVENANT WITH DEATH, AND AN AGREEMENT WITH HELL'--INVOLVING BOTH PARTIES IN ATROCIOUS CRIMINALITY,--AND SHOULD BE IMMEDIATELY ANNULLED."²

Garrison's disunionist position puzzled some, but he insisted that repeal of the Union was a legitimate anti-slavery tactic. Abolitionists, he noted must urge repeal because slavery polluted not only the South, but the North as well since the two sections were joined by the "pro-slavery" Constitution. The North was implicated in the sin of slavery and the only way to clear its "garments from pollution" was to dissolve its association with the South.³ Apparently many other radical abolitionists agreed, for at the 1844 AASS meeting, disunionism was adopted as the society's official position, but not without heated debate.⁴

Whether Garrison realistically believed that the Union would be--or could be--dissolved is highly questionable. Aileen Kraditor has argued that his advocacy of disunionism "was strictly an agitational weapon . . . it was the statement of a moral imperative, a reveille to the conscience; and it was made by an agitator who knew that those who heard the call were in no condition immediately

to translate it into practice."⁵ Garrison himself publicly admitted that disunion sentiment advanced by the AASS would serve chiefly as a method "to create discussion and agitation throughout the North . . . and . . . to convulse the slumbering South like an earthquake, and convince her that her only alternative is, to abolish slavery, or be abandoned by that power on which she relies for safety."⁶ By advocating such a radical measure, then, Garrison hoped to generate anti-slavery discussion and to parade the consequences of slavery before "slumbering" southerners.

Garrison's disunionist tactic not only promoted discussion, it also produced angry rebuttals. As might be expected, new organizationists and political abolitionists in New Hampshire were quick to censure the concept. The People's Advocate sneered at disunion, noting that not more than twenty-five New Hampshire abolitionists supported Garrison's "silly and abortive ravings against the Union," and those who did support repeal of the union were "perfect fanatics." Certainly Garrison's ludicrous cause "afford[s] amusement to the gay and disgust to the grave." In a more somber tone, the People's Advocate claimed that although New Hampshire political abolitionists were not blind lovers of the Union, they were nevertheless capable of seeing the obvious: disunion would not end slavery at all; it merely would insulate slaveholders from abolitionist attacks. If new organizationists believed that disunionism was counter-productive, they were bewildered that non-resistants were promoting it. Garrison and his followers were contradictory because they were advocating measures that would ultimately produce physical violence, war and carnage.⁷

Garrison, however, could count on a number of supporters in New Hampshire, especially Stephen Foster, Parker Pillsbury, and John R. French, the printer of the Herald of Freedom and fiancé of Rogers' eldest daughter.⁸ Rogers, however, was not convinced that disunion should be a legitimate concern for abolitionists. When the issue was first broached in 1842, Rogers supported it, albeit reluctantly. He was uncomfortable with it because as a staunch "no-voting" abolitionist, Rogers recognized that citizens ultimately would be required to vote for the union's dissolution. Nevertheless, in 1842 and 1843, Rogers endorsed "repeal," weakly justifying his position by claiming that voting for the dissolution of the Union was the only form of political action an abolitionist could embrace.⁹

Yet, by early 1844 he had abandoned repeal. Perhaps because Rogers had long held that the North and the South were equally guilty in sustaining the institution, he could not understand the logic behind dissolution, or why Garrison was obsessed with the notion. For Rogers, repeal of the Union seemed contradictory: if the North was just as guilty as the South, what good would come from dissolution of the Union? Why should the two sections separate? "Are they not alike? Are they disagreed as to slavery,--or any other iniquity?" The two sections should not separate over the issue of slavery, Rogers instructed, "for they don't differ on it. The North is a little more servile and pro-slavery than the South, to be sure, but not enough to warrant any quarrel." Indeed, the "bulwark of slavery" was not the Constitution but the "religion of a slaveholding country" and the churches and the clergy which sustain it.¹⁰ Clearly, for

Rogers, disunionism served no purpose, except possibly to shift attention away from the church and clergy, the most tenacious foe of abolitionism.

If Rogers felt uncomfortable when earlier he had violated his principles and supported repeal, he felt more uncomfortable now that he opposed it because he recognized that his opposition would isolate him from his friends. This was made apparent when Rogers, Pillsbury, and Foster called on Garrison at his home in Boston. What transpired at the gathering is unclear, but in a letter to his Irish abolitionist friend Richard Webb, Rogers conveyed the notion that he was clearly in the minority when the subject of disunion was discussed. Perhaps, he mused, he should think twice on the matter, since after all, disunion "has his [Garrison's] sanction" and Rogers did not enjoy opposing Garrison. But if Rogers were to remain true to his principles, he would have to oppose repeal:

I abhor everything political as instrumentalities in a moral enterprise like ours. Garrison is advocating the dissolution of our political Union. It is a thing our politicians alone can do and which is as immaterial to our purpose, as Irish repeal is to your temperance movement. . . . How William Lloyd can advocate it, while he could not conscientiously take any part in it, I do not see.¹¹

While Rogers resisted Garrison's disunionism, Garrison was alarmed at the lengths Rogers was carrying radical abolitionism in New Hampshire. Most abolitionists were perplexed by Rogers' actions and thought that he would eventually destroy the old organization in the Granite State. Indeed, there can be little argument that Rogers was pursuing an unprecedented course, the result of which threatened to alienate not only Garrison, but his New Hampshire friends as well. For both Rogers and his opponents, the issue was

the structural and procedural foundations of anti-slavery organizations.

Rogers, insisting that "untrammelled freedom" be practiced by abolitionists, urged that anti-slavery societies dispose of all officers and moderators of meetings since they only served to stifle "free discussion" of anti-slavery principles. Business reports and committees likewise should be dropped because both took time away from the discussion of anti-slavery principles. Indeed, anti-slavery meetings should be spontaneous, with little organizing and with no formal delegates chosen. Any abolitionist who desired a meeting need only to post a notice and all abolitionists who wished to attend could do so. Formal, structured societies would be unnecessary and abolitionists would be able to discuss all elements of anti-slavery, free of interruptions from the chair and from committees. No longer would the mechanics of organization stifle anti-slavery discussion.

To the horror of his opponents Rogers had brought his non-resistance principles directly into the arena of anti-slavery organizations, a proposition that most abolitionists found indefensible. Without some form of organizational framework--indeed, without societies themselves--efficient anti-slavery agitation would cease. By 1844 and 1845, some astonished abolitionists could only reach the conclusion that Rogers, like the mentally disturbed Abigail Folsom who supported him, had taken leave of his senses.

Rogers first articulated his philosophy of "no-organization"--as his position was called--early in 1842. He was distressed to find that the moderator of a Boston anti-slavery meeting liberally used

his gavel to call the meeting to order whenever the discussion tended to drift. Rogers complained that

it is growing incongruous to our eyes to see liberty of speech regulated, in our anti-slavery meetings, as if they were a tumultuous town meeting, or a general court, where men are legislating against liberty, instead of discussing her great principles merely with a view to affecting public opinion. . . . we hope to see anti-slavery meetings, by and by, maintained in spontaneous order.¹²

By the spring of 1842 Rogers was successfully persuading New Hampshire abolitionists to embrace his "no-organizationist" philosophy by holding meetings without officers or committees. The first "free meeting"--one without officers or committees--was held at the 1842 Hillsborough County Anti-Slavery Society, apparently with success.¹³ But, for Rogers, the 1842 NHASS annual meeting was the most inspired, "unsurpassed" meeting ever held. Without a doubt, the 1842 convention deviated markedly from past anti-slavery meetings everywhere, and it was obvious to everyone that Rogers was moving the NHASS in a radical new direction.

For Rogers, the 1842 convention was "the freest meeting we have ever had of the Society." Indeed, for the first time delegates were not chosen; rather, all abolitionists who wished to attend could do so. Once the meeting began, the participants, in an effort to escape "from the nominal thralldom of the Society itself," urged that the NHASS Constitution be amended to abolish the office of the President. While the vote failed to receive a two-thirds majority, Rogers was nevertheless ecstatic because little attention was paid to "the official or authoritative portion of our associate structure." Instead of taking the time to elect officers for the coming year, the participants merely agreed to keep the current ones in office.

Rogers claimed that this action served as a vote of confidence for the hard-working men occupying the offices. But more important, it showed that the New Hampshire abolitionists attached slight value to "official authority." In fact, most of the first two days passed without anyone occupying the President's chair; when the President finally arrived "the meeting was in full-tide of successful experiment of self-regulation, and neither he nor any one else seemed inclined to interrupt it,--and when the question was at last taken up, it occasioned the meeting more trouble and disorder, than every other cause during its sitting."¹⁴

Rogers did not want abolitionists to misunderstand him; there was no effort to disband the NHASS because most felt that the Society's "harness" and "yoke" were not overbearing:

All any one seemed to feel about it, was an apprehension that association by written Constitution, was no longer needed. That we could go on spontaneously--organized not by our signatures, but by union of heart and principle-- . . . nothing could separate us from each other, or hinder our spontaneous, simultaneous, associate movement. That we were one in character and purpose, and that any attempt at keeping us embodied--or regulating our united action, would tend only to embarrass and confuse us. That endeavoring to enforce an association among us, and to oblige us to harmonize, by outward appliance, would not only weaken our union, and tend to dissolve it--but was in derogation itself of the very liberty we were seeking for the slave and the country.¹⁵

But a "free meeting" had its drawbacks. While Rogers was pleased with the unprecedented nature of the 1842 meeting, he was also disappointed that a few participants used the occasion to focus on purely anti-clerical themes rather than dealing with anti-clericalism as a mode of abolitionism. In addition, many left early, thereby preventing a discussion of the few resolutions that

were introduced, one of which called for the abolishment of the clerical office and another which insisted that all abolitionists were duty-bound to come-out of their churches.¹⁶ Nevertheless, Rogers believed that on balance, the meeting was an overwhelming success for anti-slavery agitation.

Rogers insisted that his disdain for "organization" and ruling bodies in anti-slavery societies was merely an extension of his non-resistance and anti-statist principles. In a confused and rambling letter to William Goodell, Rogers claimed that man had abandoned freedom and the "law of love"--a condition to which he was born--and resorted to fear and force. One consequence of this was slavery which "grows out of the corporation principle and will last as that does. The Corporation law is the law of the strongest--which is the law of the meeting house, and the spring of its worship." Rogers acknowledged that man was born to society and not to solitude, and that his rights and duties were social:

But I do not agree that he was born to whatever form of social (or unsocial) existence he may be thrown into, by the cunning power of the devil, instigating the majority --or rather leaders. . . . I would not have the minority to rule--against the majority. If anybody rules, let it be the majority--but let there be no ruling. Man was not born to be ruled, or to rule.¹⁷

Clearly, in view of the 1842 meeting and other local meetings held throughout the year, Rogers was living out his principles within the anti-slavery arena. If there were to be no rulers, he would not, for instance, urge abolitionists to participate in an anti-slavery meeting in Hancock, New Hampshire as the citizens of Hancock had requested. Abolitionists, he lectured, would go to the meeting

out of principle, not from urging.¹⁸ He was overjoyed to find that abolitionists had done away with all committees at the 1842 Essex County (Massachusetts) meeting. "Committees are apt to feel committed themselves--or too much like committed and imprisoned men, to push boldly and freely forward in the announcement of pioneer resolves."¹⁹

If abolitionists were startled by Rogers' course at various anti-slavery meetings, they must have been shocked at the increasingly radical statements made in the Herald, either by him or by the numerous letter-writers who were given space as a result of Rogers' "open door" editorial policy. In early 1842, Rogers made it a point to print anything that was sent to him. As a result, the Herald served as a magnet for every anti-clerical, non-resistant, no-organization abolitionist living in New England. One writer praised Rogers for "freeing" the Herald: "the paper is free, and abolitionists are free men."²⁰

While the Herald attracted radical letter-writers throughout New England, most who wrote were active New Hampshire abolitionists and non-resistants. John Orvis (see Chapter VII) consistently supported Rogers' position. Orvis held that every human institution was "on a false basis." Governments were "rolled in blood, [and] they roll their bloody garments around all other human institutions, cursing and rotting them all by their loathsome corruptions." Even the anti-slavery cause was hurt by its institutional framework. "So long as we attempt to conform it [abolitionism] to the beastly institutions of the age," Orvis proclaimed, "the curse of Meroz

will be upon it." Orvis also exclaimed that no voter could be an abolitionist, because human government was based upon force; voting merely sustained "man's dominion over man."²¹

Rogers agreed. In praising Orvis' letter, he declared that:

We are ready to say that anti-slavery has no voting to do, and nothing to accomplish by voting or legislating. A voter is a physical force man, to be sure, and an anti-slavery voter is for putting down slavery by the sword. --Every ballot is a sword scabbard with a sword concealed in it,--not to be drawn, provided the enemy submits on being threatened,--but to be drawn and flourished if he does not submit, and if he resists, to be laid on him with cut and thrust. One who holds to this we think is not a rational abolitionist.²²

Clearly, Rogers had moved beyond Garrison and other old organizationists. Garrison obviously disagreed with Rogers' total withdrawal from political action, for the Bostonian, while urging abolitionists to avoid the major parties, nevertheless advised them to "scatter" their votes.²³ Furthermore, while he did not condemn the anti-institutional and no organization philosophy publicly, he was disturbed with it nevertheless. In a veiled resolution that he sponsored at the Strafford County Anti-Slavery Society in 1842, Garrison made the point that if an institution were evil and supported slavery, then it should be attacked. But if an institution were free of pro-slavery domination, then it need not be opposed.²⁴

Edmund Quincy was more direct. Anti-slavery societies had value, he said, and the abolitionists had a responsibility to breathe new life into them. Without mentioning Rogers and his New Hampshire followers directly, Quincy proclaimed that if any abolitionist had "a conscientious principle against organization --it is a scruple which all genuine abolitionists will respect, if

they cannot understand it." But Quincy worried that no-organization might be an excuse to shun hard work for the cause. While it was not required that all abolitionists join an anti-slavery society, it was nevertheless obvious that where the cause was strong societies were present. Agitation was essential to purify the country, and while a single individual could do a great deal, more could be done in groups. After all, Quincy remarked, fire companies were more efficient than the bucket system.²⁵

Rogers never took these gentle remonstrances to heart, save only to explain cheerfully that he did not expect everyone to agree with his position.²⁶ Whatever his critics might say, Rogers had no intention of altering his course. He saw no problem with extending his come-outer, non-resistant principles to the anti-slavery cause itself. As has been illustrated in Chapter VI, Rogers held that the major iniquity in American society was power and authority; by their power and authority, the State and the clergy enslaved the black southerner and everyone else. While anti-slavery organizations were not as heinous as the State and the clergy, their institutional structures nevertheless mirrored the larger society by "confining" the abolitionists. Hence, whenever an anti-slavery convention failed to adapt to Rogers' no-organizationist vision, the New Hampshire editor could be expected to chastise it for not living up to abolitionist principles. By the spring of 1844 Rogers was becoming more vocal in his protestations.

Rogers was especially irked with the 1844 New England Anti-Slavery Society meeting. In a whining and sarcastic editorial he condemned the NEASS because it not only introduced irrelevant

topics (disunionism), but it had prepared these topics in advance, a "cutting and drying matter to which a meeting is to be limited and confined." For Rogers, such organized procedures "inevitably deadens anti-slavery feelings, and palsies the genius of the anti-slavery gathering." If issues were to be discussed, they should not be prepared by a committee prior to the meeting; rather, they should arise spontaneously, free from the interference of a handful of committee members. Rogers was also upset that Abigail Folsom had been forcibly ejected from the meeting. True, he acknowledged, she was disruptive and emotionally disturbed, but she nevertheless had every right to speak, as did everyone who attended.²⁷

Garrison probably was annoyed with Rogers' complaints about the New England meeting, yet he did not respond in the Liberator. But when he read Rogers' description of the 1844 New Hampshire annual meeting, he was moved to chastise his friend severely. Clearly, Garrison had grown weary and impatient with the no-organization doctrine.

The 1844 New Hampshire meeting was, in Rogers' estimation, a "free" one until Stephen Foster and Enoch Mack, President of the Society and ardent Freewill Baptist, "took the pains to introduce some business matters,"--the election of officers--which interrupted the discussion of anti-slavery principles. Why was such a course necessary, Rogers asked. Sarcastically chiding the two, Rogers noted that Foster wanted officers only because a traditional organization would make it easier to obtain funds and to secure "the confidence of the business public." Mack wanted officers installed "to secure the Christian religion, by keeping up the forms of civil authority."

In addition, Foster presented a motion to sever the Herald from the NHASS, but as an anti-no-organizationist, he was the only one who bothered to vote. Mack would have voted, Rogers noted, but he was in the chair and therefore unable to vote unless there were a tie. Nevertheless, Rogers sneered, Mack would have voted if he could, because he was anxious to sever his relationship with a paper that championed no organizationism and anti-clericalism.²⁸

Garrison was shocked with both the tone and content of Rogers' article. Reprinting Roger's discussion of the meeting under the heading "Shall we Disband?" Garrison noted that the New Hampshire convention was a "highly interesting," yet disturbing one as well. It may have been a "free meeting," but a confused Garrison noted that nothing of importance was accomplished. This was unfortunate because the Granite State abolitionists were faced with some important business concerns; chief among them was formulating a plan to sustain the financially-pressed Herald of Freedom. Worse, the language of Rogers' article was objectionable and "apparently deficient in magnanimity and not warranted by the facts in the case."

Foster and Mack did not deserve censure, Garrison insisted, for they merely sought to elect officers "in accordance with the requirement of the [NHASS] constitution." Is preservation of the Society worthy of censure, he asked. Furthermore, why was Mack attacked? He may indeed have his "superstitions," but "in candor, I think such an attack on him, simply for being 'in the chair,' and doing the legitimate business of the Society, is not charitable."

Garrison also questioned the value of no-organization itself. If every society--state, local, and national--adopted the no-

organization doctrine, abolitionism would dissolve. Indeed, the concept made little sense and was obviously contradictory:

When a meeting has been called to take up the question of southern slavery, and to devise measures for the overthrow of that horrid system, they [no-organizationists] often seem to think that it is a more profitable occupancy of the time to declaim against the appointment of any person to preside on the occasion, or to keep a record of the proceedings, or of any committee to suggest business, or to mature any plans for future action!

For Garrison, this preoccupation was "magnify[ing] molehills into mountains"; it was "straining at the gnat." No-organization was unacceptable to Garrison and he strongly protested against it and denounced the 1844 Convention. Given the increasing tensions among radicals, it was obvious that the Granite State society was growing weak and Rogers' formulations were not enhancing it in any constructive way.²⁹

Clearly, by 1844 the two men were drifting apart; Rogers was unable to support disunion and Garrison was unable to support no-organization. Yet, these differences did not develop directly into an open breach, although Rogers continually tried Garrison's patience with his no-organizationist ideas. For example, Rogers, appealing to the AASS Executive Committee to provide funds for Parker Pillsbury, casually suggested that money donated to the Society should, in turn, be given to an individual for a specific purpose rather than to a large "corporation." It is more anti-slavery-like to impart directly to a person with a soul and heart, than to a corporation [treasury or state society], which is without a heart--or to a committee, which, at best, is but a representative of humanity." The AASS, Rogers noted, had spent money unwisely in

the past. Too much money went to New York to purchase dull books which were deposited on shelves, probably to remain there "till the moths make it otherwise."

Garrison was stupified. "If 'official responsibility is not quite sacred enough for anti-slavery trust,'" he exclaimed, "then, in our opinion, individual responsibility is not. If one can be safely trusted, then why not two? Is the integrity of such persons as Francis Jackson, Wendell Phillips, Edmund Quincy, and Maria W. Chapman, in comparative peril, because they are acting in associate capacity?"³⁰

Such incidents did not lead to a split, yet ironically an unbridgeable gap developed between Rogers and Garrison--and between Rogers and his fellow New Hampshire radicals, Stephen Foster and Parker Pillsbury--over a business squabble: the ownership of the Herald of Freedom.

As has already been shown, Stephen Foster introduced a resolution at the 1844 NHASS annual meeting which sought to sever the Herald from the Society. Since he was the only one who voted, the resolution passed. Foster's motives are unclear, but he probably was growing fearful that Rogers' no-organizationist philosophy might lead to the Society's eventual destruction. Whatever the case, Rogers was amenable to the break since the Herald would "now . . . be nominally, as well as really, free of any organic trammels."³¹ Garrison likewise thought that this was the best policy because Rogers would be free to discuss anything he desired without "implicating" the Society.³²

Unfortunately for Rogers and John R. French, the publisher of

the Herald, neither was to experience the joy of working with a "free" and "untrammelled" paper. French, hard-pressed to pay off his mounting debts, announced shortly before the 1844 convention that the Herald would cease publication. Enough money was then donated to resuscitate the paper; however, the Society insisted that it was to be published "under the auspices of the Board of Managers" of the NHASS. French's decision to disband the paper had raised an important point: did the NHASS own the paper or did French? The Board of Managers of the NHASS, led by the inconsistent Foster, claimed that the Society owned it, and as such, French had no right to halt publication of the paper without the Society's permission. French claimed that he owned it because the Society did not pay him or Rogers a salary; instead, the two men were forced to rely on donations for personal incomes. For his part, Rogers did not care who owned the paper, but he was drawn naturally to French's side because French was engaged to be married to Rogers' eldest daughter. By mid-summer of 1844 the battle lines were clearly drawn.

The problem of ownership was brought to a head when French eventually substituted his name for the Society's as publisher. Clearly, French was defying the Board of Managers and, as a result, New Hampshire abolitionists sought a special meeting of the NHASS for the fall of 1844 to decide the issue of ownership once and for all. In the meantime, the aggrieved parties could not refrain from publicly airing their differences and, as a result, Granite State abolitionists became embroiled in a vicious, public, and internecine battle.

Rogers was especially petulant. In a letter to his Massachusetts

friend Francis Jackson, Rogers wrote of his desire "to bestow a line on Stephen S. Foster--for his Reverend demonstrations towards the Herald of Freedom. He has contrived . . . to place the matter in a totally false aspect."³³ To inflame matters further, Rogers began casting the dispute in ideological terms: Foster, the Board of Managers and other anti-Rogers abolitionists were in league to silence the no-organizationist philosophy. Rogers only hoped that Garrison would put aside ideological differences and judge the issue on its merits alone. But in late October, that possibility --to Rogers' mind--was highly questionable: "I don't know whether dear Garrison will forgive my heresies about organizations and committees long enough to go with us."³⁴

Other abolitionists, repulsed by Rogers' notions of a conspiracy, wrote to one another advising that the New Hampshire editor should be approached with caution. Rogers, one abolitionist wrote to Richard Webb of Ireland, must be left alone and as quiet as possible, "otherwise his passions will grow ever fiercer and more fiercer." Quincy urged that Wendell Phillips--a man Rogers respected--write a "private letter" to the New Hampshire editor in an attempt to calm him. Francis Jackson urged Rogers to settle the dispute with Foster and the Board in order that the upcoming special convention be a friendly affair.³⁵

But Rogers could not be persuaded to temper his remarks. As a result Garrison, uncomfortable with the growing bitterness in New Hampshire, published an editorial that confirmed Rogers' worst fears: Garrison had deserted French and had sided with Foster and the Board. While the Bostonian lauded French for his anti-slavery

activity, he could not ignore the Board's evidence "which, unless promptly refuted, must place the publisher [French] in any other than a creditable position before the public." For Garrison, "it is plain that the Herald is the property of the State Society, and under their exclusive and legitimate control as the representatives of that Society; and consequently that it ought at once to be put into their hands." Garrison admitted that more facts may be in the offing but from what he had been able to piece together, French had "seriously erred in judgment, though we shall be slow to impeach his intentions."³⁶

Clearly, Garrison was not anxious to bring Rogers into the fray. All of the Bostonian's criticisms were levelled at French, who by early November had denounced the Board and had called Foster a calculating liar. Yet, at the same time, Garrison realized that Rogers would play a central role in the final solution to the Herald's problem. It was, he said, imperative that Rogers attend the November 29 special convention; Rogers' presence was "absolutely indispensable to an harmonious adjustment of the difficulties." But Rogers, claiming that he was ill, did not attend.³⁷

Immediately after the special convention was called to order, a committee was chosen to determine the ownership of the Herald. Although Parker Pillsbury was a member, the committee largely consisted of Massachusetts abolitionists, including Garrison, Wendell Phillips, Edmund Quincy and Anne Weston. Their decision was reached quickly: the Board owned the Herald and, moreover, "the conduct of Mr. French was censurable in sundry particulars." But the committee also unanimously endorsed Rogers as editor and

hoped that he would continue at that post. This decision was endorsed by the entire convention, and the delegates, echoing the committee, unanimously urged that Rogers remain as editor.

French, however, was not satisfied with the outcome and immediately focused on Rogers and his no-organizationist position, a topic that Garrison and others had assiduously avoided. The problem of the Herald, French insisted, did not lie with him, but with Rogers' radical doctrines. For years, abolitionists "in certain quarters," uncomfortable with no-organization, had attempted either to overthrow the paper or confine it. Today, they had succeeded, French exclaimed.³⁸

Rogers apparently agreed and throughout the remainder of the year and most of 1845, he charged that abolitionists had conspired to expel him from the editor's chair. Clearly, Rogers was overstating his case. True, Garrison denounced no-organization, but he was anxious that Rogers remain as editor. On more than one occasion, Garrison argued that the dispute did not--or should not--include Rogers, and that the New Hampshire editor's attempts to place himself at the center of the fray were unnecessary and divisive:

It should be constantly remembered that the editor of the Herald is involved with this controversy, only so far as he has voluntarily and unnecessarily made himself a party to it. He was resting under no impeachment, and therefore was not on trial.

French was the central figure in the dispute, according to Garrison, but if Rogers continued to endorse French's position then both must "be reproved in a faithful and impartial manner."³⁹

Rogers was convinced, however, that Garrison, Foster and others sought to silence his "heresies." As a result, Rogers refused to

edit the Herald because, even though Garrison and other abolitionists had urged him to resume his duties, he could not "decently" submit, since the Society would ultimately control it. Therefore Rogers never went back to his post, thus ending his six-year term as editor.⁴⁰

Self-pity soon enveloped the fifty-year old former editor. In letters to friends he continually emphasized his constant bouts with illness, the loss of the Herald, and the desertion of his friends. "It will be [a] dull life to me (if I live one) after the . . . excitement of the last six years and in a state of outlawry as we shall be," he wrote to Francis Jackson.⁴¹ Indeed, thanks to Foster and Garrison, Rogers "had another pull-down" and their attacks "makes it slow and up-hill work for me to get well."⁴²

After he resigned from the Herald, Rogers maintained that the problem of ownership was secondary and that the subsequent quarrel would have remained a small and insignificant feud had it not been for the intervention of the Massachusetts abolitionists, especially Garrison. Foster and the Board "would have been harmless but for Garrison." Indeed, the Herald, Rogers wrote to English abolitionist Elizabeth Pease, was

stopped by the violence of Foster, one of my coadjutors. He is backed up by Garrison himself--by Quincy--Mrs. Chapman--Wendell [Phillips] and I don't know whom else. . . . They know nothing of the merits of the case--which was merely that Foster got a notion that the publisher of the paper, John R. French, was receiving too many donations and himself too few.

The Boston and New York groups, Rogers claimed, "became alarmed at my notions about organization" and, as a result, sought his downfall.⁴³

Rogers could not be dissuaded from his belief that Garrison was the chief cause of the Herald's demise. Garrison, Rogers asserted, supported "committeeship and corporation" and was therefore blinded by the debate over ownership. As a result, "Garrison helped kill it. I shall tell him he helped kill the Herald of Freedom."⁴⁴

But before Rogers could scold Garrison, he was dealt another blow. In late December, Parker Pillsbury announced that he had been designated the new editor of the crippled Herald.⁴⁵ This must have hurt Rogers deeply, for he was especially close to Pillsbury. In the early 1840's he had feverishly sought donations for the financially pressed Pillsbury. Furthermore, he had allowed Pillsbury to room at his home when Pillsbury could not afford a home of his own. For Rogers, Pillsbury's action was tantamount to treason. "I am ashamed at Parker Pillsbury's position," Rogers wailed.⁴⁶

Pillsbury, however, had grown apart from Rogers and, like Foster, found the no-organization philosophy distasteful and counter-productive. Worse, Pillsbury was growing impatient with Rogers' and his supporters' bellicose personal attacks on every abolitionist who disagreed with the idea of no-organization. After a flood of shrill and vitriolic pro-Rogers letters--mostly from Rhode Island and Massachusetts--were published in the Liberator, Pillsbury was astonished that "Rogers could stand silent, and see such floods of low, vulgar, senseless abuse poured upon us in his defense, and by his devoted and fawning sycophants."⁴⁷

Pillsbury was anxious to revitalize the Herald and to "get . . . rid of the vermin that has infested our meetings for the last two

or three years."⁴⁸ Apparently he was successful, for the Herald was once again in circulation by early 1845 and Pillsbury rapidly pulled away from his predecessor's no-organizationist doctrines.⁴⁹ There would be, Pillsbury announced, a structured anti-slavery society in New Hampshire, and it would issue the Herald under the Board's aegis.⁵⁰

Rogers, however, was determined to circulate his radical views, and in February 1845, announced that he would be editor of THE Herald of Freedom. Not surprisingly, John R. French was designated as publisher. Rogers would at last be free of all interferences from an "insolent Board" and "friend Foster." There was, Rogers convinced himself, "a feeling about starting a new paper--and a good deal of indignation at friend Foster on account of stopping the old one."⁵¹

Other abolitionists were worried that Rogers' new paper--with the article "The" serving as the only distinction between the two papers--would confuse and divide abolitionists. Francis Jackson gently urged Rogers to drop his plans for a new paper. "Two Heralds," he noted, "cannot be supported . . . and both I fear would be swamped."⁵² Pillsbury was less calm than Jackson, implying to Garrison that legal action may be looming on the horizon: "Here is the Prospectus [for Rogers' The Herald]," Pillsbury scrawled. "Is it very modest to take our name--? The Post Master and some others think not--"⁵³ The National Anti-Slavery Standard condemned Rogers' action and claimed that the presence of The Herald amounted to "a declaration of war."⁵⁴

Garrison, for his part, praised Pillsbury and urged abolitionists everywhere to donate money to the Society's Herald. At the same time,

he was growing weary of Rogers' petulant articles published in the Lynn [Massachusetts] Pioneer, edited by Henry Clapp, a sympathetic no-organizationist. From December, 1844 through February, 1845, Garrison and Rogers engaged in a war of words, each rehashing the arguments concerning the ownership of the old Herald.⁵⁵ Unable to tolerate Rogers' diatribes any longer, Garrison finally told his readers that

friend Rogers has become a monomaniac on the subject of organization and free meeting, and it is perfectly idle, while he is in that state of mind, to attempt to argue with him. The disease has absolute mastery over his reason, his judgment, and his common sense. . . . All this would be irresistibly ludicrous, if it were not distressingly pitiable. It is within a hair's breadth of lunacy, downright lunacy. . . . It is there to be treated with all forbearance, tenderness, and charity.⁵⁶

In February 1845, Rogers had been isolated from all but a handful of supporters. Parker Pillsbury was probably correct when he informed Garrison that it "is doubtful whether Rogers has many real allies (not friendly) any where."⁵⁷

By February, there were two Heralds, one edited by Rogers and one edited by Pillsbury. If Rogers had hoped to attract New Hampshire readers, he must have been disappointed because most of his subscribers lived outside the state, while Pillsbury's paper presumably attracted old organizationists in New Hampshire.⁵⁸ In any event, both papers lacked readers and, as a result, neither was able to manage financially.

Clearly Rogers' no organizationist philosophy and the subsequent dispute over the Herald served to weaken the old organization in New Hampshire. From 1840 until 1844 the old organization was the dominant faction in the state, while the new organizationist New

Hampshire Abolition Society, lacking both members and a spirited paper, languished. In addition the Liberty Party, while increasing its votes every year, was nevertheless a "disorganized and unsophisticated organization" until late 1844.⁵⁹ This is not to imply that the old organization necessarily represented the majority view among abolitionists in the state; in fact, the old organization may have represented the minority position. There is evidence, however, that abolitionists unfriendly toward radical abolitionism--especially Foster's and Pillsbury's tactics of "speaking freely" in churches--remained in the old organization because it was the only effective avenue for concerted anti-slavery agitation.⁶⁰ But Rogers' extreme no-organization philosophy and the ensuing debate over the Herald served to provide a rationale for lukewarm supporters to leave the old organization in disgust. Furthermore, anti-slavery political activity emerged as a potent force just when the NHASS was convulsed with internal disruptions. If, by 1844, the disputes were not enough to drive the more conservative members out of the old organization, the revitalized political abolitionists often were able to attract them--as well as unaffiliated anti-slavery men--to their causes.

Clearly by 1844 the Liberty Party's fortunes were changing. True, from 1841 through 1844 it had increased its vote at each yearly election, but the party was never able to formulate an aggressive political strategy for capturing victory at the polls.⁶¹ Also, the People's Advocate, the party organ in New Hampshire, could not attract enough readers and, as a result, eventually failed. But by 1844, the party received the support of the New Hampshire Abolition Society

and it boasted a new, exciting (and solvent) party organ, the Granite Freeman. In addition, political abolitionists got a tremendous boost from an unexpected source--the New Hampshire Democratic Party.

Unable to support his party's platform, which called for the annexation of Texas, Democratic Congressman John Parker Hale of Dover, publicly renounced the Democrats' position. As a result, he was taken off the party ballot and replaced by a candidate who reflected the pro-annexationist position of the state's Democratic party. Democrats sympathetic to Hale followed him out of the party, dubbed themselves the Independent Democrats, and began to work for Hale's election to Congress in March, 1845.⁶² For most abolitionists, Hale's remarkable and stunning turnabout transcended factional bickering, and as a result the battles among New Hampshire's abolitionists were all but forgotten. Anti-slavery in New Hampshire was moving in a new direction.

Ironically, the political abolitionists received support not only from Garrison, but from New Hampshire old organizationists as well. In 1844, Stephen Foster attended several Liberty Party conventions and, breaking with his anti-political stance, reached the conclusion that the third party was a "proper" anti-slavery instrumentality.⁶³ Likewise, while Garrison did not endorse the New Hampshire Liberty Party, he nevertheless began reprinting articles from the Granite Freeman in his own paper. But more important, Garrison and many New Hampshire abolitionists lent their full support to John Parker Hale and applauded his "manly" break with the pro-slavery Democrats.

Hale was not, strictly speaking, an abolitionist. In 1845 he merely sought to prevent the annexation of Texas and, soon thereafter, denounced the introduction of slavery in any newly created territories. While Garrison was undoubtedly aware of this important distinction, he nevertheless did all that he could to persuade New Hampshire abolitionists to support Hale in the March, 1845 election. Hale's position on annexation, Garrison proclaimed, "is a miracle of political independence and uprightness, but it will probably cost him his seat in Congress."⁶⁴ To prevent this possibility Garrison, who was "very anxious to do something that should secure John P. Hale's election," persuaded the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society to send four of its agents into the Granite State to campaign for Hale.⁶⁵ Parker Pillsbury, echoing Garrison's support for Hale, enlisted the Herald of Freedom to do battle for the Congressman, although in a letter to the Bostonian, Pillsbury complained that he was unable to generate a sustained movement for Hale.⁶⁶

If Foster, Pillsbury, Garrison, and other Granite State old organizationists were tempering their anti-political positions--either by lending support to Hale or to the Liberty Party--Rogers was not. Politics was force and Garrison, by applauding political abolitionists, merely compromised his non-resistance doctrine. Garrison was two-faced, Rogers sniffed: "Garrison holds politics a mortal sin," Rogers complained to Francis Jackson, "yet he fills his paper with the doings of politicians."⁶⁷

With the changing fortunes of the Liberty Party and with the excitement generated by Hale's defection from the New Hampshire

Democracy, Rogers found little support for his unbending anti-political stance. But "the Board's Herald" also found little support and, as a result, it stopped printing in the spring of 1845. If Rogers' radical voice was being smothered by the din of anti-slavery politics in the Granite State, he could at least find some satisfaction in the fact that The Herald had outlived the Society's Herald.

Although The Herald was still in circulation, Rogers was nevertheless isolated from the mainstream of anti-slavery activity. Few people read The Herald and, in order to pay his mounting debts, Rogers was forced to write articles for Horace Greeley's New York Tribune, extolling the beauties of New Hampshire's White Mountain area.⁶⁸ Moreover, in the spring of 1846, anti-slavery politics accomplished an astounding victory. A Liberty Party-Independent Democrat-Whig coalition gained control of the state government and, as a result of an internal bargain, agreed to send John Parker Hale to the United States Senate. Serving as speaker of the New Hampshire House until his U.S. Senate term began in 1847, Hale would be instrumental in passing a number of anti-slavery resolutions that urged both the end of slavery in the District of Columbia, and the exclusion of slavery from the territories.⁶⁹ Even though abolitionists were outnumbered in the coalition, Hale's selection to the Senate and the passage of numerous anti-slavery resolutions constituted a political revolution in New Hampshire, given the fact that pro-southern Democrats had maintained control of the House throughout the 1830's and 1840's. Clearly, political abolitionism was gaining ascendancy in New Hampshire, but Rogers was not part of it.

His isolation from the cause, his financial problems, and the

success of political abolition in the state prompted Rogers to reflect on more than one occasion. It was a shame, Rogers wrote to John Greenleaf Whittier, in 1846, only a few months before his death, that he and Garrison had had a severe disagreement: "I really loved him, & he did me, so far as he can love any body but himself." Perhaps, Rogers conceded, he himself was to blame for fomenting the dispute; after all, he had blindly idolized Garrison, which had "led him [Garrison] to take liberties with me." At the same time Rogers even seemed to be having second thoughts about his anti-political doctrine:

As to political action . . . I see a sort of necessity of it--an inevitability of men's using it. The public wilfulness cannot be vented in any other than regular or orderly way.--It might be governmental wilfulness or anarchical. The regular army or the mob. Perhaps it had better be the regular--though I do not feel like joining it.⁷⁰

Even though Rogers could "see a sort of necessity" in political action, it is doubtful that he would have dropped his radical non-resistant doctrines to work for an anti-extensionist--or even an abolitionist--candidate, as Garrison had done. Whatever the case, the point is moot, for on October 16, 1846, an increasingly ill and impoverished Rogers died. Ironically, New Hampshire became a "no-organized" state after his death. The faction-riddled and weakened state society could no longer function effectively, and in the early months of 1847, it followed Rogers to the grave.

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By 1847, the "Board's Herald," The Herald, the NHASS, and Rogers were all dead. Had the surviving old-organizationist leadership remained in New Hampshire, perhaps the movement might have lasted a few years longer, but in the late 1840's Pillsbury, Foster, Beach, and eventually French, left the state permanently. Clearly, without an organization, press, and leadership, radical abolitionism itself was dead in the Granite State.

The passing of radical abolitionism in New Hampshire generated few mourners, for by the late 1840's a more immediate question arose: specifically, were the lands newly acquired from Mexico to be annexed as free or slave territories? For New Hampshirites and Americans everywhere, the future of the territories became a paramount issue and, as a result, the evils of the State and clergy were all but forgotten by 1850.

While it cannot be said that New Hampshire's political abolitionists met the same fate as their more radical rivals, they were nevertheless negatively affected in an organized sense by the debates concerning the future of the new territories. Indeed, the Free Soil Party—a party dedicated not to immediate emancipation, but to the principle of preventing slavery's extension into the territories--in effect spelled the death of the Liberty Party in New Hampshire and elsewhere, because to most northerners concerned about slavery, the Free Soil Party appeared as a more feasible and less radical way of combatting "the Slave Power." In time, most New Hampshire political abolitionists, like their counterparts elsewhere, drifted into the new party because by 1848 it was the

only vehicle that would confront the South--albeit indirectly--on the issue of slavery.

But the political abolitionists did not join the Free Soil Party without paying the price of having their demand for immediate emancipation diluted. For not only did the 1848 Party platform focus on slavery extension rather than slavery itself, but it also endorsed tariffs, a homestead law, and other economic issues.⁷¹ While New Hampshire political abolitionists probably had little difficulty supporting these additional issues, they were nevertheless first and foremost anti-slavery men, who, in the early 1840's, had made a conscious effort to devote their crusade to "one idea"--the immediate abolition of slavery.⁷² Hence, although the political abolitionists did not destroy themselves in a frenzy of internecine warfare as the radicals did, they too ceased to exist, at least in any organized form, for they were subsumed by a party that treated immediate emancipation only obliquely in a platform dedicated to a host of issues.

Even though their organizational strength had all but disappeared and their crusade had become diluted by the 1850's, the political abolitionists could ultimately take comfort in the fact that they, along with others, would help lay the groundwork for the Republican Party, which slowly but eventually would become dedicated to abolishing slavery. As for radical, non-resistant abolitionists, there was considerable irony in the fact that the destruction of slavery was eventually accomplished by the power of the State against a backdrop of a violent and bloody war.

CHAPTER VIII

NOTES

- ¹ N.P. Rogers to Henry C. Wright, April 12 and 13, 1843, ASC-BPL.
- ² Liberator, March 17, 1843.
- ³ Ibid., May 6, 1842.
- ⁴ Ibid., May 17, 1844.
- ⁵ Kraditor, Means and Ends, pp. 206, 207; most abolitionists agree with Kraditor's analysis. See, for instance, Sorin, Abolitionism, pp. 73-75.
- ⁶ Liberator, May 31, 1844.
- ⁷ Ibid., May 13, 20, June 24, 1842.
- ⁸ Ibid., May 24, June 14, September 6, 1844.
- ⁹ Ibid., November 17, 1843; February 2, 1844.
- ¹⁰ Ibid., June 7, 21, 1844.
- ¹¹ N.P. Rogers to Richard Webb, January 29, 1844, ASC-BPL. Actually, Rogers was incorrect, for Garrison did not condemn all voting. See Chapter V.
- ¹² Herald of Freedom, February 11, 1842.
- ¹³ Ibid., April 15, 1842.
- ¹⁴ Ibid., June 10, 1842.
- ¹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁷ Ibid., July 8, 1842.
- ¹⁸ Ibid., October 7, 1842.
- ¹⁹ Ibid., October 14, 1842.
- ²⁰ Ibid., January 28, 1842.

- 21 Ibid., January 7, 1842.
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 See, for example, Liberator, January 27, 1843.
- 24 Herald of Freedom, October 7, 1842.
- 25 Liberator, December 23, 1842.
- 26 See, for example, Herald of Freedom, July 22, 1842.
- 27 Liberator, June 21, 1844.
- 28 Ibid., July 20, 1844.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 Ibid., October 4, 1844. Edmund Quincy was equally upset with Rogers as Garrison. "Do you really believe that my being a member of the Ex. Com. of the Am. A. S. Society will affect my honesty of character and make me any more likely to misappropriate the funds entrusted to me than if they were given to me in any individual character? . . . You will excuse me, my dear friend, if I say that I think you [are] getting a little intolerant and bigotted in the subject of your No-Organization themes. . . . I think your views about organized meetings and societies extravagant and untenable--and I see the fruits of it everywhere, but especially in New Hampshire." Edmund Quincy to N.P. Rogers, September 13, 1844, Rogers Collection, Haverford College Library.
- 31 Liberator, July 5, 1844.
- 32 Ibid., July 20, 1844.
- 33 N.P. Rogers to Francis Jackson, October 30, 1844, ASC-BPL.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Isabell Jennings to Richard Webb, n.d., 1844; Edmund Quincy to Maria Chapman, October 28, 1844; Francis Jackson to N.P. Rogers, November 6, 1844, all in the ASC-BPL.
- 36 Liberator, November 8, 1844.
- 37 Ibid., November 22 and 29, 1844.
- 38 Ibid., December 13, 1844.
- 39 Ibid., December 27, 1844.
- 40 N.P. Rogers to Richard Webb, January 3, 1845, ASC-BPL.

- 41 N.P. Rogers to Francis Jackson, December 11, 1844, ASC-BPL.
- 42 N.P. Rogers to Francis Jackson, January 22, 1845, ASC-BPL.
- 43 N.P. Rogers to Elizabeth Pease, December ?, 1844, ASC-BPL.
- 44 N.P. Rogers to Richard Webb, January 3, 1845, ASC-BPL.
- 45 Liberator, December 27, 1844.
- 46 N.P. Rogers to Richard Webb, January 3, 1845, ASC-BPL.
- 47 Parker Pillsbury to William Lloyd Garrison, February 13, 1845, ASC-BPL.
- 48 Parker Pillsbury to William Lloyd Garrison, June 11, 1845, ASC-BPL.
- 49 See, for instance, Liberator, December 27, 1844, and January 3, 1845.
- 50 Ibid., December 27, 1844.
- 51 N.P. Rogers to Francis Jackson, January 6, 1845, ASC-BPL.
- 52 Francis Jackson to N.P. Rogers, January 14, 1845, ASC-BPL.
- 53 Parker Pillsbury to William Lloyd Garrison, February 4, 1845, ASC-BPL.
- 54 Liberator, February 28, 1845.
- 55 See, for instance, Ibid., December 13, 1844 through February 28, 1845.
- 56 Ibid., February 21, 1845.
- 57 Parker Pillsbury to William Lloyd Garrison, June 11, 1845, ASC-BPL.
- 58 Ibid. Presumably, new organizationists read neither.
- 59 Reinhard O. Johnson, "The Liberty Party in New Hampshire, 1840-1848: Antislavery Politics in the Granite State," Historical New Hampshire (Summer, 1978), p. 131.
- 60 See, for example, Liberator, December 13, 1844.
- 61 Johnson, p. 133.
- 62 Ibid., pp. 134-36. Richard Sewell, John P. Hale and the Politics of Abolition (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), pp. 48-67.

- 63 Liberator, February 28, 1845.
- 64 Ibid., January 24, 1845.
- 65 Sewell, p. 64; Liberator, January 21 and 31, March 7, 1845.
- 66 Parker Pillsbury to Francis Jackson, February 13, 1845,
ASC-BPL.
- 67 N.P. Rogers to Francis Jackson, January 3, 1845, ASC-BPL.
- 68 All of his articles, written under the pen name of "Old
Man of the Mountain," can be found in the Rogers Collection, Haverford
College Library.
- 69 Johnson, p. 146.
- 70 N.P. Rogers to John Greenleaf Whittier (copy), June 8, 1846,
Rogers Collection, Haverford College Library. The original may be
found in the Harvard College Library.
- 71 Stewart, Holy Warriors, p. 119.
- 72 Johnson, "The Liberty Party in New Hampshire, 1840-1848,"
p. 136.

AFTERWORD

Ultimately abolitionism transcended state, regional, and even ideological boundaries for, despite their differences, abolitionists in every northern state envisioned a society free of slavery. Yet, even though abolitionists could agree on the primary goal of their crusade, the anti-slavery movements at the various state and local levels were often distinguished by a particular focus, ideology, or tactic. New Hampshire was no exception. While some features of New Hampshire abolitionism were similar to those in other northern states, other features were unique to the Granite State.

Most abolitionists in New Hampshire and elsewhere agreed that slavery was a sin and, as a result, most state and local anti-slavery societies were preoccupied with this theme until at least the mid-1830's. Furthermore, the evidence suggests that the social composition of individual abolitionists in New Hampshire reflected the larger American abolitionist community. Most abolitionists came from Whig backgrounds and most were financially secure. In New Hampshire, as elsewhere, the Democratic party led the assault on abolitionists and, apparently, the incident at Canaan was not unique, for as historian Leonard Richards has noted, major occupational differences separated the abolitionists from hostile anti-abolitionists.¹

Abolitionism in New Hampshire--both in its preliminary stage in the 1820's and in its more progressive stages in the following decades--also contained features that were unique to the state.

This was especially true with the New Hampshire Colonization Society, the harbinger of abolitionism in the Granite State. To be sure, New Hampshire colonizationists sought the removal of blacks from American soil; but they also sought an end to slavery, they argued that blacks were not inherently inferior to whites, they implicated the North in sustaining the sin of slavery, and they deplored racial prejudice that pervaded white society. This relatively radical outlook, so different from most other state colonization societies, was probably due to the fact that New Hampshirites felt less threatened by blacks since the state was far removed from both the institution of slavery and a large free black population.

New Hampshire abolitionism was also different from the movement elsewhere in that two-thirds of all organized abolitionists in the Granite State lived in relatively large towns--towns with over 2,000 people--and close to forty percent resided in the three rapidly growing mill towns and in the state capital. True, abolitionism in Massachusetts probably attracted most of its followers from the larger urban centers in the eastern and central portion of the state, but abolitionism in other New England states, in western New York, and in the Western Reserve apparently did best in rural areas.²

Likewise, the secular critique advanced by New Hampshire abolitionists--a critique that portrayed the South as a politically powerful, anachronistic, anti-commercial and anti-manufacturing region--was also advanced by abolitionist newspapers in urban areas, such as the New York-based Emancipator and the Boston-based

Liberator. However, it appears that such a critique was diluted, if not absent altogether, in rural areas. This is particularly evident in western New York--the "Burned-over District"--and in the Western Reserve where abolitionism took root in communities that had been exposed to religious and moral ferment generated by evangelical revivalism.³ New Hampshire, however, was not distinguished by evangelical tumult, but by industrial transformation. It is understandable that New Hampshire abolitionists--many of whom actively participated in commercial and manufacturing ventures--viewed slavery as an outmoded institution that was totally at odds not only with the more enlightened economic and social environment of the North, but with the economic and social realities of the nineteenth century western world.

These differences suggest that abolitionism reflected the particular social and economic milieu from which it emerged. Since abolitionism in western New York took root in small towns and rural areas heavily influenced by revivalism, the religious and moral impulse took precedence over any sustained economic and other secular denunciations of slavery. While the religious impulse certainly was not absent in New Hampshire, it was nevertheless relatively subdued compared with the more animated revivalism in the West. Moreover, because a sizeable number of abolitionists were directly involved with commercial and manufacturing endeavors, the condemnation of the politically powerful, archaic, and agrarian South had real meaning for Granite State abolitionists.

While the movement in New Hampshire contained elements that were both similar to and different from the elements with the movement elsewhere in the 1830's, abolitionism in the Granite State during the 1840's was almost entirely unique. Indeed, after the 1840 split, the anti-slavery movement in New Hampshire was distinguished by the fact that a highly vocal and overwhelmingly pro-Garrisonian, radical non-resistant contingent served as the dominant wing within the movement, while the conservative and political abolitionists were organizationally weak. However, in other states, especially in Maine, New York, Vermont, and Ohio, non-resistants played a minor role after 1840, while their ideological rivals, the political abolitionists, enjoyed greater successes, even in Garrisonian-dominated Massachusetts where they were at least competitive and relatively strong organizationally.⁴

By the early 1840's non-resistant abolitionists in New Hampshire went well beyond the ultra formulations of Garrison, and engaged in activity that distinguished them from every other abolitionist group in the nation. Taking their cue from Nathaniel P. Rogers who argued that all individuals, black and white, were slaves to the State and to the pro-slavery clergy, Stephen Foster, Parker Pillsbury, T. Parnel Beach, and others carried their peculiar brand of abolitionism to extreme lengths. Moreover, the cause in New Hampshire was further set apart from the abolitionist mainstream when Rogers began to live out his radical notions of "no organization."

Oddly, while the framework of radical abolitionism in New

Hampshire was constructed largely by Nathaniel P. Rogers, it was not an original idea that he alone developed. Rather, Rogers simply combined the secular critique that he and other New Hampshire abolitionists promoted in the 1830's with Garrison's non-resistance philosophy. Filtering events through this curious prism, Rogers could reach only one conclusion: the institution of southern slavery was merely an extreme manifestation of unrestrained power. The real evil--the source of all power and oppression--was the State. Together with its handmaiden, the clergy, the State protected and preserved slavery in the South and, in addition, held northern citizens at bay.

But Rogers was not content to merely extend the critique of the 1830's and combine it with non-resistance; eventually he extended the concept of non-resistance to such lengths that other radical abolitionists practically read him out of the anti-slavery movement. Nevertheless, in the early 1840's, Rogers was able to forge a number of abolitionists into the most radical group within the anti-slavery community.

Rogers' denunciations of the church and the "pro-slavery" clergy struck a responsive chord in men such as Foster, Pillsbury, and Beach. All had been trained for the clergy and all had grown disenchanted with their profession because many fellow clergymen could not bring themselves to endorse abolitionism. But according to the "sons of thunder," abolitionism was steeped in the principles of Christianity; therefore, most clergymen, regardless of denominational affiliation, deserved to be censured because they were openly violating Christian precepts.

After 1840, Pillsbury, Foster, Beach, and others chose to take their cause back to the arena of institutional religion, even though they were no longer a part of it. For them, the church and clergy--so influential in molding American lives--had abandoned "true Christianity." Hence, no other institution exhibited the same degree of hypocrisy as the church; no other group violated God's law to the same extent as non-abolitionist ministers. According to the "sons of thunder"--and according to Rogers--if slavery were to fall, it would first have to be dealt a blow in the northern "pro-slavery" churches.

AFTERWORD

NOTES

¹ Liberator, August 21 and 28, 1840; September 10, 1840; Emancipator, May 15, 1840 and October 12, 1841; Sorin, New York Abolitionists, p. 105; Walters, The Antislavery Appeal, p. 16; Richards, "Gentlemen of Property and Standing," pp. 131-55, but especially p. 140.

² Cross, The Burned-Over District, passim; Filler, The Crusade Against Slavery, passim, but especially p. 29.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Reinhard Johnson, "The Liberty Party in Vermont, 1840-1848: The Forgotten Abolitionists," Vermont History, XLVI(Fall, 1979), pp. 258-75; Richard Sewell, Ballots for Freedom, passim; Edward O. Schriver, Go Free: The Antislavery Impulse in Maine, 1833-1855 (Orono: The University of Maine Press, 1970), pp. 47-61.

APPENDIX

Individuals in the following five towns have been divided into approximate quintiles in an attempt to compare the identifiable abolitionist population with identifiable non-abolitionist Whigs and Democrats and with the entire town. Every effort was made, after ranking each individual from the wealthiest to the poorest, to divide the population into five equal groups of 20%. But because most towns--especially Newmarket--had more than 20% of its population paying the minimal tax, the 20% demarcation had to be revised. There is a suggestion in the tax records that the poorest category probably was composed not only of individuals who in fact experienced economic hardships, but also of individuals who, while old enough to pay the tax, lived with their wealthier fathers.

Campton (n=266)

	<u>Entire Town</u>	<u>Abolitionists (n=46)</u>	(No Democrats nor Whigs)
Upper Level	20.7% (55)	39.1% (18)	
Upper-middle Level	18.8 (50)	21.7 (10)	
Middle Level	19.9 (53)	13.0 (6)	
Lower-middle Level	19.6 (52)	10.9 (5)	
Bottom Level	21.0 (56)	15.2 (7)	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
	100.0 (266)	99.9 (46)	
Mean Tax	\$8.98	\$12.27	

Durham (n-350)

	<u>Entire Town</u>	<u>Abolitionists (n=7)</u>	<u>Democrats (n=8)</u>	(No Whigs)
Upper Level	18.0% (63)	42.9% (3)	62.5% (5)	
Upper-middle Level	18.0 (63)	0	12.5 (1)	
Middle Level	17.4 (61)	14.3 (1)	12.5 (1)	
Lower-middle Level	18.0 (63)	14.3 (1)	0	
Bottom Level	28.6 (100)	28.5 (2)	12.5 (1)	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	
	100.0 (350)	100.1 (7)	100.0 (8)	
Mean Tax	\$5.88	\$6.56	\$11.49	

Loudon (n=341)

	<u>Entire Town</u>	<u>Abolitionists (n=11)</u>	<u>Democrats (n=39)</u>	<u>Whigs (n=4)</u>
Upper Level	19.1% (65)	27.3% (3)	30.8% (12)	50.0% (2)
Upper-middle Level	18.8 (64)	18.2 (2)	20.5 (8)	50.0 (2)
Middle Level	19.1 (65)	45.5 (5)	15.4 (6)	0
Lower-middle Level	21.7 (74)	9.0 (1)	12.8 (5)	0
Bottom Level	21.4 (73)	0	20.5 (8)	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	100.1 (341)	100.0 (11)	100.0 (39)	100.0 (4)
Mean Tax	\$6.41	\$7.85	\$8.41	\$12.94
Mean Value of Land	\$978.00	\$1124.00	\$1360.00	\$2250.00

New Ipswich (n=385)

	<u>Entire Town</u>	<u>Abolitionists (n=9)</u>	<u>Democrats (n=4)</u>	<u>Whigs (n=5)</u>
Upper Level	17.4% (67)	55.6% (5)	0 %	80.0% (4)
Upper-middle Level	17.4 (67)	11.1 (1)	50.0 (2)	20.0 (1)
Middle Level	18.4 (71)	22.2 (2)	0	0
Lower-middle Level	16.6 (64)	0	25.0 (1)	0
Bottom Level	30.1 (116)	11.1 (1)	25.0 (1)	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	99.9 (385)	100.0 (9)	100.0 (4)	100.0 (5)
Mean Tax	\$6.03	\$13.00	\$5.04	\$17.78
Mean Value of Land	\$698.62	\$1450.00	\$595.00	\$1810.00

Newmarket (n=431)

	<u>Entire Town</u>	<u>Abolitionists (n=8)</u>	<u>Democrats (n=14)</u>	<u>Whigs (n=10)</u>
Upper Level	15.5% (67)	75.0% (6)	28.6% (4)	50.0% (5)
Upper-middle Level	15.5 (67)	0	28.6 (4)	10.0 (1)
Middle Level	16.7 (72)	25.0 (2)	14.3 (2)	20.0 (2)
Lower-middle Level	14.0 (60)	0	14.3 (2)	0
Bottom Level	38.3 (165)	0	14.3 (2)	20.0 (2)
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	100.0 (431)	100.0 (8)	100.1 (14)	100.0 (10)
Mean Tax	\$4.72	\$13.75	\$8.92	\$11.00
Mean Value of Land	\$9472.03	\$2333.75	\$1139.29	\$1522.22

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